

SAINT PAULS.

88463

A Monthly Magazine.

EDITED BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

ILLUSTRATED BY J. E. MILLAIS, R.A.

VOL. III.

OCTOBER 1868 TO MARCH 1869.

LONDON:

VIRTUE AND CO., CITY ROAD AND IVY LANE.

1869.



"The fact is, mamma, I love him."

Phineas Finn. Chap. 1. Page 128.

SAINT PAULS.

OCTOBER, 1868.

THE SACRISTAN'S HOUSEHOLD,

A STORY OF LIPPE-DETMOLD.

CHAPTER XL

PUSS-IN-BOOTS.

It was not very long before the Prince's tenants in Horn and its neighbourhood began to feel the pressure of an unseen hand, which weighed rather heavily upon them in various ways. The new land-steward, Major von Groll, was by no means a popular character in the district. He was never seen, and it was therefore safe to attribute to him all the disagreeable and tyrannous qualities which the imaginations of the people who suffered from the severity of his rule were able to conjure up. True, he used a cat's-paw to pull sundry ripe, plump, temptingly-cooked chestnuts out of the fire,—a very soft cat's-paw covered with a velvet glove. But what comfort was this, seeing that the chestnuts were infallibly taken? And then, too, poor Grimalkin got scorched in the process.

A mild, fair-spoken gentleman was the Herr Justizrath; always ready to listen to reason and to sympathise with trouble. But his chief, the Major, was inexorable. It cut him,—von Schleppers,—to the heart to be obliged to refuse to renew a lease, or to have to raise a rent, or to eject a tenant. But his duty clearly was to carry out the orders of the Prince's steward. And he must say, hard as it was in many cases to make the admission, he must, as a jurist, confess that the Herr Major von Groll had law if not justice on his side, and always kept strictly, though sternly, within the limits of his right.

Poor Grimalkin!

It struck some people as singular that Major von Groll, who was a stranger in the Principality, should possess so intimate a knowledge of the state of affairs in Detmold. And such persons as found this strange, frequently expressed their wonder to Lawyer von Schleppers.

"Ay, ay," he would answer dreamily. "Indeed, indeed! Well, I own that I am sometimes surprised myself at the extent of the Herr Land-steward's private information. Yes, I don't mind saying that it frequently surprises me. And, to speak truth, I have more than once doubted his accuracy on certain points, and have said to him, 'Lieber Herr von Groll, I think that here you are mistaken. The rent has hitherto been so many thalers, and not so many; and the value of the land has not increased in such a proportion as to make it fair to the tenant to raise his rent.' I desire above everything to be fair to the tenant—always with due regard to the interests of my gracious master, his highness. But I have always been wrong in my facts. Always wrong. Ach Himmel! The Herr Major von Groll knows it all as I know my alphabet. And you see in Bopp's time I had no chance of knowing much of the land-steward's business. Because old Bopp,—rest his soul, an excellent man!—did the work of managing the estate himself, and only employed me professionally when any case of litigation arose. It is nominally the same now. O yes, quite the same,—nominally. But——"

And then people would go away and say how hard it was that the foreign Major should take the salary, while the indefatigable Justizrath did the work. And in the privacy of their own houses, many would go a step further than this, and regret that Herr von Schleppers had not all the power in his own hands, since, if he had the power, poor folks would surely meet with kindness and consideration. All which would of course have surprised the Justizrath very much could he have heard it.

On his return home after the visit he had paid to Horn, the old lawyer set to work in earnest to initiate Major von Groll into the duties of his new office. But it was an up-hill task. Von Groll was,—if not as Frau von Schleppers had so trenchantly observed "as stupid as an owl,"—still a slow-witted, simple, solemn man. His two predominant ideas were, firstly, that nobility of birth conferred almost limitless privileges, and rendered its possessor incalculably superior to all other mortals who were not born noble; and secondly, that it behoved a gentleman, out of respect for himself and his order, to use this superiority and these privileges with forbearance. To have endeavoured to sway Major Ferdinand von Groll by any representation of the effect of his conduct upon those whom he looked on as his inferiors, would have been about as hopeless as to try to persuade him to leave off riding on the plea that his horses considered equestrian exercise to be highly objectionable. His mind was inconceivably indolent. Thinking was a process utterly distasteful, difficult, and laborious to the Major. And on this account did he the more tenaciously cling to any conviction once reached. He had arrived at the conviction that it would be profitable, and in no

way degrading, to accept office under the Prince of Detmold. He had also, assisted by his wife, arrived at the conviction that von Schleppers,—himself a well-born man, and therefore, to some extent, a fellow-creature—ought to, and could, and would bear the main burden of the business. The duties of a real acting land-steward were, it seemed, onerous enough, involving memory, clearness, activity, and considerable special knowledge for their due performance. All von Schleppers' explanations and observations served but to puzzle the ex-cavalry officer, and to convince him that he could not do better in the interests of the Prince than leave matters as much as possible in the lawyer's hands.

Meanwhile Lawyer von Schleppers was steadily making hay,—the Prince's hay, of course,—while the sun shone. But his business employments did not prevent him from prosecuting those private studies of character in which he considered himself to be so acute.

"Every scrap of information about people is of value, and comes to be useful some time or other." So thought the Justizrath, using the plea in justification of what some might have stigmatised as mere idle curiosity. But the truth was that von Schleppers had the magpie instincts of acquisitiveness and secretiveness very strongly developed, and loved collecting and hiding odds-and-ends of information, even when it was out of the question that he should ever be able to use them.

Much stealthy enjoyment had the Justizrath, in thinking over his evening at the Pied Lamb in Horn. And he did not forget to keep a quiet watch on Liese. He thought he had discovered the "patriot" who instilled hero-worship into her simple little mind, in the mild apothecary, Herr Peters. But then that shy smile! Could the thought of the spectacled, middle-aged, sandy-haired apothecary have conjured up that look on Liese's pretty face? It appeared unlikely, but the Justizrath von Schleppers knew very well that in judging of such matters the words "likely" and "unlikely" ought to be blotted out of one's dictionary. Jack and Jill seldom come together in accordance with the preconceived theories of their friends as to what would be fitting and desirable; and their friends are not unfrequently very angry in consequence. The Justizrath was by no means angry, however, because he thought he had discovered something which it had been intended to keep secret from him. Von Schleppers would have been grieved if you had murdered his brother,—he was a far from inhuman man,—but it would have been a decided consolation to him to have found out how you did it.

When the old lawyer returned home from Horn, he gave the wife of his bosom a full account of his doings there. Mathilde was duly edified by the progress her lord had made in learning by heart the *carte du pays* of so considerable a portion of the scene of his future

operations. Regarding only one part of his adventures did he show some reticence in his recital to Mathilde. That was his visit to Lehmann's farm. Frau von Schleppers, knowing that her husband had been in the neighbourhood of her serving-maid's home, asked with some curiosity what sort of people were these Lehmann's, and whether he had brought any message for Liese.

"Dear me," said the Justizrath dreamily, "I had forgotten all about that. Yes, yes, kind greetings, hearty greetings, for the little maid. I must deliver them,—if I can think of it. What sort of people are they? Oh, good quiet country folk. A fine old homestead, and a well-filled garner. Lehmann has that hill-side meadow too cheap, though. To be sure; Liese's kin, eh? Ay, ay, ay!"

He continued to "forget" the message to Liese, until an opportunity occurred of delivering it without witnesses. Frau von Schleppers had promised to grace with her presence a little réunion at the house of Frau von Groll. The Justizrath was invited also, but he never gave an unconditional assent to such invitations. Business as he avowed,—and the Blue Pigeon, as he did not avow,—had superior claims on him to those even of such highly polite society as was to be met at the von Grolls. He might be able to look in during the evening, or he might not. As soon as his wife had set off for the party, he went into his own den, and taking out a bulky leather pocket-book,—the same which had figured at the Pied Lamb,—began attentively to examine some hieroglyphical notes in it. "Humph!" muttered the Justizrath, "seventeen in April last. She has been thirteen years with them the housewife told me. Thirteen from seventeen. Only four years old. Well, well, all information is valuable;—sure to come in, every scrap." With that he slowly rubbed his hands over one another, and walked into the kitchen.

There sat Lieschen with a great brass pan on her knees, which brass pan she was polishing and rubbing until it shone in the fire-light like gold. A row of brass and pewter pots and dish covers, already brightened by her busy hands, stood glistening on the dresser. As she rubbed, she sang softly to herself with the little bird-like chirp I have spoken of before, and her head was bent down, so that she did not see her master enter. Hear him she could not; for, noisy as the clapping slippers were sometimes, their wearer could shuffle along quietly enough when it so pleased him.

"Liese!"

"Ach, Herr Justizrath! Bitte! Did you call me? I didn't hear you."

"Ay, ay, child, how you jumped! Do you know what folks would say if you were a fine lady, eh?"

"N—no, sir," stammered Liese, blushing violently.

"Why they would say to your face that your nervous organisation was extremely delicate; and they would say behind your back that

you were a lump of affectation. Your mother is a braver woman than you, little Lieschen. It wouldn't be easy to frighten her, I'm thinking."

"My mother, sir? Ach Gott! Poor mother is dead, gnädiger Herr, these many years." Here a big round tear dropped on to the brass pan and dimmed its lustre; and then Liese's slender wrist resumed its rapid oscillations to and fro with redoubled activity.

"Oh true, child, true. There, there, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. What would you have? I believe I am the most absent man in the world." The Justizrath threw as much kindness into his voice as he knew how, and expressed his regret by thrusting out his yellow tortoise-like head, and wagging it deprecatingly from side to side. So he stood and rubbed his hands over the fire in his old fashion, and gradually seemed to lapse into one of his waking dreams, and to be abstracted from all outward circumstances.

Liese dried her eyes and scrubbed away at the brass pan; and she found the employment soothe her fluttered spirits very efficaciously. I have no idea that this panacea for over sensitive nerves will ultimately supersede aromatic vinegar, or eau de Cologne, but I throw out the hint for the benefit of those whom it may concern.

Presently Liese looked up, and beheld her master still planted before the fire as though he had taken root there. "He must have come into the kitchen to give me some order, or to ask me some question, and has forgotten all about it," thought she; so she made bold to speak to him. "Were you seeking anything, gnädiger Herr?"

The Justizrath slowly turned his dull eyes upon her, and then answered after a pause, "Right, child, right—I had nearly forgotten. I have to deliver a message to you from your,—from the good people at the farm yonder."

"Oh! you saw them then, sir? How was my dear cousin Franz? And cousin Hanne?" This last was asked a shade less eagerly than the first inquiry.

"I saw them. Yes. Both the farmer and the Haus-frau. They were well, and they sent you,—let me see,—ay, they sent you lovingest greetings. Those were Lehmann's very words. I am scrupulous to be exact. A message entrusted to you should be as precious as a sum of money given into your charge, and it would be equally wrong to take away a word from the one, as a doit from the other. Remember that, little one."

"Yes, sir," answered Liese humbly. And she thought within herself what a good, true-hearted man the Herr Justizrath was, and what a weak little fool she must be to be afraid of him.

"They said too," proceeded von Schleppers, "that they should send you over another parcel at the first opportunity."

"Heart's thanks, gnädiger Herr."

"I saw more than one friend of yours in Horn, Liese. There was the fat landlord, a solid-minded, honest fellow; and the old Küster,—what's his name?—and Peters the apothecary."

Again the bright flush flitted over Liese's face, and the shy smile hovered round her lips. "Oho!" thought the old lawyer sagely, "I was right enough. That look was most surely not called up by the thought of the ancient sacristan. The lank, sandy-haired seller of drugs is the 'patriot' after all." You see the Justizrath did not know that the ancient sacristan had a nephew who was neither lank nor sandy-haired.

"Peters brought you a parcel from home some time ago, did he not?" said von Schleppers speaking carelessly, but watching the girl narrowly out of his cold cunning eyes.

"Yes, sir, he did. But I did not see him. I was out on an errand for mistress." The remembrance of the pink satin note-paper, and of the meeting with Otto, combined to deepen Liese's blush.

"He has known you a long time, this Peters?"

"Almost all my life. He remembers my coming to Horn in cousin Franz's waggon, after poor mother died. I can scarce remember that myself." Ting, ting, ting, jingled the house-bell, as though tugged at by strong fearless fingers. Liese jumped up, and then stood hesitating. "It's too soon for mistress to be home yet," said she. "I wonder who it can be!"

"You are surely not afraid to open the door, Liese?" said the Justizrath, testily. "No doubt it is some client come to consult me. Say I'm busy, very busy;—d'ye hear?—but that you will ask if I can see any one should the case be urgent. Wait until I am in my study before you open the door." Then the master of the house shuffled away to his sanctum, and closed, but did not quite shut the door. It would ill have comported with his social or professional dignity to have been caught in the kitchen. He had scarcely gained his own room when a second vigorous pull set the wire quivering, and made the thin-voiced bell jangle noisily.

He listened stealthily and heard Liese's faltering footsteps approach the house-door. "What a little timid fool the girl is!" muttered her master impatiently. He heard the bolt withdrawn, and almost immediately afterwards a little exclamation from Liese; then another voice,—a man's, as it seemed. But not all the sharpness of the Justizrath's hearing enabled him to distinguish what was said, and he did not venture to advance nearer, lest he should be caught by the visitor whose approach he momentarily expected. All at once, after a more protracted colloquy than he had anticipated, the house-door was closed and bolted, and the Justizrath, turning to his desk with a rapidity of movement which would have much surprised any of his acquaintance who should have witnessed it, plunged his hands into a

mass of documents, and waited, with head bent down, for the expected client. To his surprise, however, only little Liese's light tread came to the door. She paused a moment, and then knocked, seeing her master apparently absorbed in his papers.

"Well?" said the Justizrath, looking up.

"It was somebody for me, please sir."

"For you?"

"Yes; a friend of mine is going to Horn to-morrow, and came to ask if I had any message to send home."

"Ach, so-o-o!"

The Justizrath stared up at his little handmaiden with a genuineness of expression to which he could not often plead guilty. Liese mistook the blank surprise of his face for the vacancy of abstraction more usual to it. So she turned round quietly and trotted into the kitchen again before her master could recover from his astonishment. By-and-by he called out to her.

"Liese! Liese, I say! Who was it that came just now?"

"A friend of mine, gnädiger Herr, is going to Horn, and called to ask if——"

"Ta, ta, ta, child! You said all that. Who was it?"

"Oh! the young man at the stationer's shop, sir; Herr Schmitt's assistant," answered Liese, greatly abashed.

The Justizrath dismissed her with a wave of his pen. "Humph!" thought he, with a vivid recollection of the cadaverous boy whom he had seen through Herr Schmitt's shop window, "this meek little damsel of ours has an odd enough taste in admirers. Or maybe this youth,—who, by the way, comes pealing at the front bell with a boldness worthy of the 'patriot' himself,—is only a tool and messenger of Peters's."

At half-past eight o'clock the lawyer set forth to fetch his wife away from the festive and fashionable society at Major von Groll's. But never a word did old Puss-in-boots say to his Mathilde about Liese Lehmann's evening visitor.

CHAPTER XII.

A VERY GENTEEL CHAPTER.

EVERYTHING in this world is comparative, we know, and only to be judged of in relation to something else. Let not the reader, therefore, despise the smallness of the ambition which led Mathilde von Schleppers to rejoice and triumph mightily in the social distinction conferred on her by an invitation to the saloons of Frau von Groll. I have written "saloons," so let the word stand. It sounds well; which, as Frau von Groll herself would have considered, is a great

thing. But, in truth, the aristocratic Major's wife had but one reception room, and that one was scarcely grand enough to deserve to be styled a saloon. Nevertheless Mathilde von Schleppers felt it to be a very fine thing to be sitting there, drinking weak, flavourless coffee, and surrounded by the "elect" of Detmold society. Everything in this world is comparative, as we began the chapter by saying, and it may be doubted whether the entrée to the private theatricals at Compiègne, or an invitation to meet a royal highness in a Belgravian mansion, ever gave more pleasure to a votary of fashion than Frau von Schleppers felt as she sat majestically on a worsted-work cushion in one corner of Frau von Groll's sofa. Indeed, to Mathilde, St. James's or the Tuileries would have been barren and worthless in comparison. What satisfaction could she find in being elbowed by duchesses, or stared at by peers of the realm, unless the doctor's wife, and the rich brewer's widow, who were not in Detmold "society," could be made to pale with envy at the knowledge of such glory having fallen to her share? Of course, folks in the great world have greater aims. But I am writing of a small place and small people, and, to say truth, the social ambitions were a little ignoble in Detmold. How satisfactory it is to reflect that yours and mine, dear reader, are so infinitely higher!

As Frau von Groll's drawing-room was a fair average specimen of similar rooms in the little capital, I may as well describe it. It was tolerably large, rather long in proportion to its width, and with three windows on one side, which overlooked the gardens of the noble old Schloss. These windows were high up in the wall, and were approached by two rather deep steps. There was another shallower step dividing the room nearly in half, after the fashion of a mediæval dais. The door gave access to the room at its highest end, and many unwary or near-sighted strangers had made an ignominious and embarrassing entrance into Frau von Groll's presence by plunging awkwardly over the unseen and unsuspected step, and coming heavily down to the lower level with the peculiar jarring shock which most of us know by experience. The walls of the apartment were of a deep bright glaring blue,—a colour of that insincere bloomy kind very often to be seen in toy-shops, and which one instinctively feels would be liable to come off on contact with any other surface. The floor was of white wood, also recalling the toy-shop in its look and in its smell, with rectangular pieces of bright many-coloured carpet, of various dimensions, scattered here and there upon it. There was a round table at the lower end of the room, where Frau von Groll usually sat, covered with a green cloth bound with yellow. The chairs were covered with crimson velvet, usually concealed by chintz, but on this festive occasion the richer material was revealed in all its glory. It was doubtless very glorious. Nevertheless, it

had the drawback of sticking tenaciously to any woollen or stuff garment with which it came in contact. Gentlemen in broadcloth and ladies in bombazine alike found an unexpected difficulty in getting up again when once they had sat down on one of these magnificent velvet cushions. At one end of the room stood a broad massive sofa in mahogany and black horse-hair, on which were disposed sundry specimens of Frau von Groll's wool-work, in the shape of pillows and cushions. The blue walls were adorned with three coloured prints, surrounded by gilt-paper in lieu of carved frames, and representing respectively Spring and Autumn, and Napoleon Bonaparte crossing the Alps. Spring was a plump fair young lady, in a chemise and a wreath of wild flowers of Parisian manufacture. Autumn was a plump dark young lady, with very broad shoulders and a very small waist, who, notwithstanding the evident tightness of her stays, had been doing a good stroke of work without apparent fatigue, for she stood, sickle in hand, contemplating a newly-reaped cornfield, and leaning elegantly against a pile of impossibly-yellow sheaves. As to Napoleon Bonaparte, he was crossing the Alps apparently to slow music, being preceded by a military band, and mounted on a fiery steed, whose action was of that eminently pawing character only to be seen in perfection in a circus-trained animal. There was the inevitable white china stove, and a French looking-glass over it. There were several groups of paper-flowers in pink, blue, and green vases, disposed on every available table or shelf; and, lastly, there was in one corner a small pianoforte, whose outer surface appeared to consist chiefly of gilding and crimson silk. Such was the aspect of Frau von Groll's drawing-room. And it certainly could not be objected to on the score of want of colour, or a too prevailing sobriety of tint.

The company assembled within it was not very numerous, but it was of irreproachable gentility. There was the Justizrath's portly wife, and Fräulein Bopp, and the stout placid matron who had made one at Frau von Schleppers' tea-party, and two other dames, who need not be more particularly described, inasmuch as they have no concern with my story. There was the Major von Groll standing with his back to the stove conversing with a group of gentlemen, and about the Major's personal appearance I may be allowed to say a word or two. He was of middle height, but owing to his extreme leanness and the military erectness of his carriage, he appeared at first sight to be a tall man. He had a long peaked face, which seemed yet longer than it really was, owing to a high, bald, narrow forehead which rose above it. His naturally fair skin was tanned to a dull deep red colour, and his long elaborately-pointed moustaches were of the lightest flaxen. He had high cheek-bones, immediately below which his cheeks sank into so deep a hollow that one might have

supposed him to be purposely sucking them in to that shape. His eyes were light blue, widely open, and rather deep-set, under shaggy eyebrows of the same flaxen hue as his moustaches. The prevailing expression of Major von Groll's face was intense and hopeless melancholy. But this was merely an illusory effect caused by his meagreness, by the downward curve given to the line of his mouth, by his long drooping moustaches, and by the unsmiling gravity of his eyes. Major von Groll was in reality by no means a melancholy man. But he was undeniably a dull man. The melancholy, which some beholders found in his countenance, was no more a real sentiment than the "melancholy" which one may see in the eyes of a ruminating ox. Our imagination connects an idea of sadness with those large dark wistful orbs that the dumb beast turns on us so mildly. But all the while the ox is chewing the cud contentedly enough. The Major wore a military uniform, but even had he appeared in any other costume it would have been impossible to mistake his profession. And one might even have pronounced pretty safely to what branch of that profession he belonged. His whole air, his gestures, and especially the habitual attitude of his legs, proclaimed the cavalry officer. He was listening with his usual solemn, silent gravity to a warm discussion going on among his male guests, and occasionally throwing in a monosyllabic contribution to the argument.

The principal disputants were a learned Professor, whose long leonine locks were shaken hither and thither in the heat of his discourse, as though a high wind were blowing about him, and a brother-officer of the Major's. "Erlauben Sie, permit me, I beg," said the latter in loud abrupt tones. "I admit your erudition. I should never dream of disputing your opinion on a point of,—of—." The military gentleman hesitated here for the weighty reason that he did not know precisely what it was that the Professor professed. But receiving no assistance from the bystanders,—who, indeed, were not conscious of the nature of the difficulty he experienced in finishing his sentence,—he presently added, with a circular wave of the hand, "on any scientific point, in short. But with regard to military questions, you must allow me to say that no civilian,—no civilian,—is competent to discuss them."

"Good," grunted the Major, from beneath his moustache.

"Listen, Captain!" said the Professor, with much solemnity, at the same time putting back his hair behind his ears with both hands, "Not long ago I was visiting the fortress of Königstein for the purpose of studying the rock formation on which it is built, and of which I have spoken in my book on the Quadersandstein of the Saxon Switzerland" (this with a significant glance at the captain, who had shown himself so ignorant of the Professor's special and distinctive reputation in the scientific world), "and while there I got into conver-

sation with an old officer,—a veteran soldier who had seen service”—again with a significant glance at the captain—“and speaking of the strength of the place, I observed, jestingly, ‘Ha, so, Herr Lieutenant, then when the French come, you are ready for them, eh?’ Upon which, he shook his head, and made answer thus; ‘Herr Professor, the French will not come,—but the Prussians will.’” At this point the Professor’s elf-locks were made, by some dexterous twist of the head, to release themselves from bondage behind his ears, and to tumble in wild disorder about his face, and the man of science folded his arms and gazed sternly on his adversary.

Then arose a great hubbub of voices. All talked together with none the less vehemence that no one could hear what the other said. “Prussia,” “Austria,” National Movement,” “Young Germany,” “Anarchy,” “Aristocracy,” “Principles of Government,” and “Revolutionary tendencies of the age,” flew about hither and thither over the heads of the disputants, like showers of shot and shell, and one or two spent balls,—to carry on the metaphor,—reached the ladies, who forthwith began to fire off blank cartridges of shrill exclamations that made a considerable report but did nobody any harm. In the midst of the noise in walked the Justizrath von Schleppers. He went straight to where the hostess was sitting, and saluted her with the tortoise-like thrusting-forth of his head, with which we are acquainted. The gentlemen were still in the thick of their wordy war, and did not observe the Justizrath. The latter was at once seized upon by Frau von Groll as a promisingly taciturn recipient of her political creed. And the good lady proceeded to edify her guest by the enunciation of some rather stern and terrible sentences upon those who were so lost to all sense of right and religion as to desire to change in any way the existing order of things. Frau von Groll was quite Draconian in the simplicity and ferocity of her theory of punishment.

“Hang them all, or cut off their heads,” said she, with a terrible resolution in her eye. “That appears to me to be the most direct course.” And Puss-in-boots put his head on one side with a thoughtful air, as though he was giving the proposition his best attention. Presently came a lull in the discussion going on near the stove, and then the Major saw von Schleppers, and came across the room to greet him.

“We were in rather a stormy debate, and I did not perceive you at first, Herr Justizrath,” said his host. The Justizrath was reminded of his evening at the Pied Lamb, and the thought just flitted across his brain that the mode of conducting a political discussion did not differ so widely at the two poles of Detmold society as might have been expected beforehand.

“I wish you gentlemen wouldn’t talk politics at all!” exclaimed Fräulein Bopp, clasping her hands.

Frau von Schleppers struck in with dignity. "My dear," said she, "that is all very well for you; but people in official positions have to consider public topics. When one belongs to the governing classes politics must be talked about."

"Well, I don't know," said the stout, placid matron, innocently; "I used always to go to her highness's Wednesday receptions when she was at the Residenz, and I'm sure the Prince never said one word about politics at all. He used to chat about the theatre and the weather and the company at the baths of Meinberg, just like anybody else."

The Justizrath hastened to smooth matters down with his velvet paw. He thought it would be well to change the topic of discourse from the manners and customs of the "governing classes" to some less dangerous ground. So he said "Ah, Meinberg! Baths of Meinberg! What a charming little place. You know it well?"

"We always go to Pyrmont," observed Frau von Groll, with a superior air.

"Oh! I know Meinberg, Herr Justizrath," said the stout matron. "We have not been there for years, it is true; but when I was first married we went to Meinberg every season, and that is fully nineteen or twenty years ago."

"My goodness!" exclaimed Fräulein Bopp, with the ingenuous astonishment of one to whom nineteen or twenty years appear an immense period of time.

"Oh, yes it is, truly. And the second year we were there quite a romance happened that made a deal of talk at the time."

"A romance? Theure Frau Oberhausen, do tell it us!" This time Fräulein Bopp was sincere and unaffected. She loved romance dearly, and was apt to believe in it with a fervour and simplicity which would have been pronounced quite charming if only the poor lady had been young and pretty.

"Oh, well, I don't know that there is much to tell," replied the stout matron, who had been addressed as Frau Oberhausen. "It created an interest at the time because the girl was known so well and was so pretty."

"What girl? Oh, do explain to us!"

"Why the poor girl that ran off with a young gentleman of good family. She was only a waitress at the Rose, but such a lovely creature. They say she was the very image of the Belle Chocolatière in the picture-gallery at Dresden."

"Hussy!" exclaimed Frau von Groll, waspishly. Frau von Schleppers' feelings were too deep for words. She raised her eyes to heaven and clasped her fat hands together in silent horror.

"Ah! well, dear me," said Frau Oberhausen, softly; "of course it was wrong, and all that, but I know I was very, very sorry for her,

poor thing! The young gentleman abandoned her after a time, and got married,—so the story went,—and I couldn't help crying over her fate. I was but a young bride, and I put the case to myself, if my Max had run off and left me,—Ach Gott!"

"Why, Frau Oberhausen," cried the hostess, pursing up her mouth, "you don't suppose such creatures have the same feelings that we have, do you?"

"What became of the girl?" asked Fräulein Bopp, timidly.

"No one ever knew for certain. Her old mother maintained for a good while that she was really married. But then folks heard of the young nobleman's marriage with a rich lady at Vienna. So, of course, it couldn't have been true what the mother said. The old woman died broken-hearted. And by degrees the whole affair was forgotten in Meinberg. New people came who had never seen the girl, and knew nothing about the story; but for two or three years the landlady at the Rose used to show a portrait of her that had been sketched by some foreign artist who came to the baths. It was a lovely face; so lovely that somebody bought it at last for its beauty, and paid a handsome price for it, too."

"Ah—h—h!" exclaimed Frau von Schleppers, rising and drawing her shawl about her with a virtuous shudder; "of course, what became of her was what always becomes of such creatures. I don't think you need waste your sympathy on her, Fräulein Bopp." Then Mathilde majestically bade farewell to her hostess, and sailed out of the room with the Justizrath shambling meekly along in her wake.

"I think Frau Oberhausen's story was in very bad taste," said she to her husband as they walked homeward together.

"Ach so! I'm afraid I was not listening to it, my dear. My head's full of business just now,—full of business." Then Mathilde perceived that for some occult reason the Justizrath desired to avoid discussing the matter. But the experience of thirty years sufficed to make her morally certain that her lord and master had perfectly heard and clearly remembered every syllable that had been said.

THE CONSERVATIVE PREMIER.

MR. DISRAELI's grandfather, whose name he bears, came to England in 1748. He was then in the vigour of youth. Hebrew tenacity and patience were blended with sagacious enterprise and intelligent boldness in his mental composition. He made a fortune, married a lady of his own persuasion, retired to a pleasant place near Enfield, and lived to the age of ninety. His wife, a strong-brained but unimaginative and unsentimental woman, had a keen sense of the social disadvantage under which Jews lie in England, and was prone to regard her kindred with querulous contempt. They had one child, a son, named Isaac. To say whence he derived his character might puzzle physiologists. His father was mercantile; his mother was hard and keen, though not bad-hearted. He was all sensibility, imagination, genius. Of course he was misunderstood; of course he received no sympathy; of course he was the prey of fantastic sorrows. His mother sneered at her Jewish darling, inflicted endless distress upon him, yet could not bear him out of her sight. To his father he was an enigma, contemplated with a kindly interest verging on indifference. When the boy was too unhappy, and ran away or the like, old Benjamin gave him a pony or some other present. Isaac lived in a world of his own, a world of reverie, fantasy, rapture, and anguish. To finish his education, he was sent to Amsterdam, and placed under a pretentious impostor, who spent his time in writing bad odes, and left his pupil to educate himself. The boy found his way to the works of Bayle, Voltaire, Rousseau. His Judaism, in so far as it differed from Deism, appears to have been erased from his mind by the persuasives of French philosophy. Rousseau was his favourite master; he revelled in the finer feelings of the heart and the religion of a child of nature. At eighteen he returned home. His imagination on the journey occupied itself with pathetic pictures of his meeting with his mother. He stalked, with agitated mien, into her presence. His figure was gaunt, his hair long, his garments unfashionable as those of an ingenuous savage. His mother regarded him "with a sentiment of tender aversion," and could not repress an inclination to titter. "Emile" went into heroics, wept, sobbed, retired to his room, and employed himself in composing an impassioned epistle to his mother. Such a phenomenon as this son of his had not come within the range of old Benjamin's experience. Would Isaac go to Bordeaux, enter

the establishment of a great merchant, and be made a man of? Isaac grandly replied that he had in his desk a poem which he desired to publish, and that the subject of it was Commerce, viewed as the supreme corrupter of mankind. What was the paternal Benjamin to make of a phenomenon like this? Happily he was of that philosophic turn of mind which appears generally to belong to people who live to ninety. He reconciled himself to the inevitable, and left Isaac to indulge his passion for book-reading and book-collecting. The youth lived among books, making notes, collecting anecdotes, writing verses, spinning theories; and as was the youth, so was the man. "His feelings," the words are his son's, "though always amiable, were not painfully deep, and amid joy or sorrow, the philosophic vein was ever evident." That is to say, he possessed no depth of human feeling, no earnestness of religious faith. His light speculative audacity, on the other hand, spurned all bounds, and vivacious activity characterised the operations of his mind. "Everything interested him; and blind and eighty-two, he was still as susceptible as a child." He wrote books of learned literary gossip and airy speculation, and became celebrated. One day he interrupted for an hour his learned rummaging and noting to get married. Another hour he would probably give, were it only to keep the peace with his womankind, when, as happened about 1805,—one biographer says, decisively, 1806,—a son was born to him. The child was called Benjamin, and went forth from that unlikely household to elbow his way into the foremost dozen of the human race, and to stand before the world as he does at this hour, Prime Minister of Great Britain.

Information respecting Mr. Disraeli's earliest days is unfortunately not to be obtained; for the curious reader, eagerly scanning his biographical sketch of his father, in quest of notes on himself, is disappointed, and his own biographers, whether of the dull-savage or the dull-panegyrical order, lend us no aid. The pleased imagination, however, genially bold, has not much difficulty in realising the kind of life he would lead in his father's house. He would be left to an unusual extent to develop himself, morally and intellectually, according to the freedom of his own will. From the time when he could comprehend the meaning of speech, he would hear of books, books, books; and when, as would probably take place at an unusually early age, he was admitted to a seat at the paternal board, the talk around him would still be of great authors and famous books, and his mind would soon become familiar with his father's pet theories. In a Jewish household, cut off from the warmest sympathies of English boyhood, listening constantly to dissertation and dubitation de omni scibili, he would grow up in an intellectual state of the wildest independence. Speculative cosmopolitanism would supersede for him the fervent patriotism and prejudice of clever English schoolboys, and the idea

would gradually gain possession of his mind that the one friend in whom Benjamin Disraeli could absolutely trust,—the one human being who deserved Benjamin Disraeli's complete devotion,—was himself.

We hear of his having attended a suburban academy, where his ambition already displayed itself; and there is mention of a Nonconformist minister with whom he resided for some time. He is next in a conveyancer's office. The likelihood is, that he would be popular with his fellows; brilliant, satirical, paradoxical, entertaining; cynical good temper his fundamental mood. Before he is out of his teens, he is connected with a newspaper, the "Representative," and already he delights in saying extreme things. His friends are angels, his foes the reverse of angels. On attaining his majority, he is a bright, vivacious, reckless lad, of exuberant vitality, indefinable religious creed, indefinable political opinions, vague speculative ideas, with much miscellaneous information, little exact knowledge, a burning desire to become famous, a clear belief that adventures are to the adventurous, and that, whether the summit of the world, Mont Blanc, is reached or not, there will be rare sport in the climbing.

The mists which shroud the early years of Mr. Disraeli break suddenly away. Encircled with a blaze of notoriety, the author of "Vivian Grey" bounds upon the stage. Mr. Disraeli, writing in 1853, pronounces "Vivian Grey" a mere literary lusus, and declares that, were it in his power, he would consign it to oblivion. He takes the pains, at the same time, to tone down some of its most highly-coloured description, and he spares the sensibilities of his aristocratic readers by omitting mention of the circumstance that the Marquis of Carabas was on one occasion "terrifically drunk." There is a hint, also, in "Contarini Fleming," a book of which Mr. Disraeli is still deliberately proud, which we venture to apply to this subject, and which conveys to us a strong impression that he has a weakness for his first performance. Contarini publishes in early youth a book called "Manstein." At a subsequent period, when Contarini's mind has developed itself, one of his particular friends, an eminent artist, refers to "Manstein." "Oh!" exclaims Contarini, "mention not the name. Infamous, unadulterated trash!" "Ah," replies the other, "exactly as I thought of my first picture, which, after all, has a freshness and a freedom I have never excelled." "Vivian Grey" is Mr. Disraeli's "Manstein," and we are much mistaken if he has not a lurking admiration for its "freshness and its freedom."

There is no reason why youthful work should be either disclaimed or despised. The question is, whether it is genuinely youthful, and if this question can be answered in the affirmative, the more youthful it is the better. April need not blush because it is not October, and even among critics those are specially imbecile who croak out frigid objections to the glow and the bloom which render the books of young

men of genius so waywardly and witchingly charming. The serious thing in Mr. Disraeli's first book is its lack of natural and healthful juvenility. In opinion, in feeling, in worldly wisdom, it is strangely old. Extravagant, sure enough, it is ; but its extravagance is not the extravagance of boyish love or of tragic and misguided heroism, as in Schiller's "Robbers;" it is the worst extravagance of the Minerva press, the extravagance of hate, of treachery, of revenge ; the extravagance of an impassioned and terrible scorn for humanity. This boy author makes his hero speak as follows :—"To rule men we must be men ; to prove that we are strong, we must be weak ; to prove that we are giants, we must be dwarfs ; even as the Eastern genie was hid in the charmed bottle. Our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice. . . . In the same spirit I would explain Jove's terrestrial visitings. For, to govern man, even the god appeared to feel as a man ; and sometimes, as a beast, was apparently influenced by their vilest passions. Mankind, then, is my great game." The writer of this has not much to learn from Swift. Scarce twenty, he is master of that bleak philosophy which is the penal accomplishment of godless, heartless age. When, some eight years after the publication of "Vivian Grey," we find Mr. Disraeli, in his speech to the electors of High Wycombe, remarking that "the people have their passions, and it is even the duty of public men occasionally to adopt sentiments with which they don't sympathise, because the people must have leaders," we cannot help being startled by the coincidence between the two passages. It is not the juvenility which has to be apologised for in that remark about Jove.

The criminality of this book is equally singular as conceived by a boy. Mrs. Felix Lorraine and Vivian Grey, both unprincipled, both clever, both versed in the science of human nature, both possessed of superlative powers of fascination, become deadly enemies. Grey is master of a secret fatal to her honour. She attempts to poison him. He vows revenge. He expresses himself thus ;—"And now, thou female fiend ! the battle is to the strongest ; and I see right well that the struggle between two such spirits will be a long and a fearful one. Woe, I say, to the vanquished ! You must be dealt with by arts which even yourself cannot conceive. Your boasted knowledge of human nature shall not again stand you in stead ; for, mark me, from henceforward Vivian Grey's conduct towards you shall have no precedent in human nature." Mrs. Lorraine succeeds in overthrowing his ambitious projects and in obtaining his contemptuous dismissal by his lordly patron. His fury reaches a climax. "It would," he says, "be but a poor revenge in one who has worshipped the Empire of the Intellect to vindicate the agony I am now enduring upon the base body of a woman. No, 'tis not all over. There is yet an intellectual rack of which few dream ; far, far more terrific than the most exquisite contrivances of Parysatis." On this intellectual rack

he proceeds to lay Mrs. Felix Lorraine. He makes good his words. He inflicts upon her tortures compared with which those endured by an Indian at the stake would be slight. "She threw herself on the sofa; her voice was choked with the convulsions of her passion, and she writhed in fearful agony. Vivian Grey, lounging in an arm-chair in the easiest of postures, and with a face brilliant with smiles, watched his victim with the eye of a Mephistophiles." His vengeance, however, is not yet sated. He continues the torture-process. His art consists in administering lie after lie, ingeniously adapted to wring with fine anguish the fibres of her heart. "When he ended, she sprang from the sofa, and looking up, and extending her arms with unmeaning wildness, she gave one loud shriek, and dropped like a bird shot on the wing. She had burst a blood-vessel." The tormentor is now satisfied. "Had Vivian Grey left the boudoir a pledged bridegroom, his countenance could not have been more triumphant." Is this not wonderful writing for a boy? What refined invention in cruelty! What firmness of nerve in its infliction! What subtle and Satanic appreciation of the essential sweetness of revenge!

There is no youthful love in the book,—that is to say, in its earlier part, which alone is of any importance; there is also no youthful religion. A meagre, arid, acrid deism is the theology of Vivian Grey. "I recognise," observes the youth, "no intermediate essence between my own good soul and that ineffable and omnipotent Spirit in whose existence philosophers and priests alike agree." Do these words indicate that the ineradicable Judaism of the race, overlaid rather than obliterated for a generation by that airy philosophy caught by Isaac Disraeli from Voltaire and Rousseau, had reasserted itself in his son? At the time when "Vivian Grey" was written, religion was perhaps a greater power in the political and social system of Great Britain than it has been at any period since the close of the seventeenth century. The Evangelical party were in the meridian of their influence, and that influence was as yet wholly good. Wilberforce, owing to his religion alone, wielded an important parliamentary influence; and the cause of the slave, the cause of the poor, the cause of public morals, were triumphantly supported by the religious party. An extravagant sympathy with all this would have been a healthy symptom in a boy. To the author of "Vivian Grey" the whole phenomenon was contemptible, as "political religionism;" and Vivian alludes with keen scorn to the circumstance that Canning, in speaking on the question of slavery, must "favour the House with an introductory discourse of twenty minutes on 'the Divine Author of our faith.'" The spirit of the book is scepticism, and old scepticism. Mrs. Lorraine will not admit that Vivian is honest even in his deism. "It is not true, Vivian Grey; you are but echoing the world's deceit, and even at this hour of the night you dare not speak as you do think. You worship no

omnipotent and ineffable essence. Shrin'd in the secret chamber of your soul there is an image, before which you bow down in adoration, and that image is YOURSELF." Mrs. Lorraine was perhaps right. Vivian Grey, as she on another occasion remarked, was "a young adventurer, alike unconnected with his race, in blood, or in love ; a being, ruling all things by the power of his own genius, and reckless of all consequences, save his own prosperity." Vivian himself refers once to some kind of study as assisting us "to fight our parts in the hot war of passions, to perform the great duties for which man appears to have been created,—to love, to hate, to slander, and to slay." A philosophy too Swiftian to be found in the mouth of a boy !

We have not yet, however, said all that justice requires us to say respecting this curious book, and although our induction of particulars should yield no neat or satisfactory generalisation, we must make that induction complete. It admits of being maintained that the character and career of Vivian Grey are depicted, not in sympathy, but in antipathy, and by way of warning and example. Early in the first volume we hear of "the advantage which, even in this artificial world, everything that is genuine has over everything that is false and forced." The temporary success of Grey, with its accompaniments of splendid scheming and brilliant mendacity, is expressly referred to by the father of Vivian as a glittering blunder, a complete mistake. "Vivian, you are a juggler," writes his father. "Is it not obvious that true fame and true happiness must rest upon the imperishable social affections ?" As the result of his unprincipled and adventurous efforts, Vivian finds himself beaten,—totally, ignominiously, miserably beaten ; and his vanquisher is a woman. He does not obtain even that momentary enjoyment of the prize which is generally conceded in devil's bargains. Instead of entering Parliament, he is turned out of doors as a cozening scamp. His reflections on his defeat are sensible, salutary, and just. "There came a horrible idea across his mind that his glittering youth was gone, and wasted ; and then there was a dark whisper of treachery, and dissimulation, and dishonour ; and then he sobbed as if his very heart were cracking. All his boasted philosophy vanished ; his artificial feelings fled him. Insulted nature reasserted her long-spurned authority, and the once proud Vivian Grey felt too humble even to curse himself." Do not these words amount to an announcement that the hero of Mr. Disraeli's first book is consciously depicted as a sham ? The artificial structure reared by immoral ambition sinks in hideous wreck ; the reality, slight it may be, but with nature's genuine vitality to maintain it, springs in vital verdure from the waste.

Still more surprising as it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact, that Vivian Grey, inhumanly as he punishes his enemy, foppish and insolent as he is to all dependent gentility, to ushers, lady companions, "the nameless nothings that are always lounging about the country

mansions of the great, such as artists, tourists, authors, and other live stock," is represented by Mr. Disraeli, even when in the full flower of his meretricious splendour, as kind-hearted. With delicate generosity and careful exertion he rescues from destruction a poor man and his family; he is a favourite with children; and at the moment of his fall he is less affected by his own misery than by the thought of that which he has brought upon the one upright and able man whom he has included in the number of his dupes. " 'So, poor Cleveland!' thought Vivian, 'then he knows all!' His own misery he had not yet thought of; but, when Cleveland occurred to him, with his ambition once more baulked, his high hopes once more blasted, and his honourable soul once more deceived,—when he thought of his fair wife, and his infant children, and his ruined prospects, a sickness came over his heart, he grew dizzy, and fell." The youth who thus expresses himself is manifestly intended to be drawn as kind-hearted.

It were bootless to set about reconciling these contradictory representations, or attempting to bring lights so high and shadows so black into the unison of tone which we look for in a correct picture. Vivian Grey is an impossible character,—a chivalrous Rashleigh, a good-natured Iago. The book, accordingly, is a bad book; contradictory, distracted, theatrico-sublime; calculated to do good to no human being, calculated to do harm to the young, and which it is culpable in Mr. Disraeli not to make a serious effort to suppress. To append to it a depreciatory and disclaiming preface, and at the same time to take means for making it procurable at ninepence by every silly boy or girl in London, is not the right thing to do under the circumstances. Its talent is unquestionable. The loquacity and bombast of youth are refreshingly absent; there is little or none of the metaphorical tawdriness, pompous enunciation of platitudes, effusive sentiment, or other forcible feebleness of precocious boyhood. Its very extravagance has the air of being calculated extravagance,—of being thrown in with the intention of forcing the world to read. Some of the dialogue is executed with rare skill,—the conversation, for example, between Vivian Grey and Stapylton Toad. The whole account of this successful man of law is able. Mr. Disraeli's practical acquaintance with the details of a conveyancer's office stood him doubtless in good stead, but it was a marvellously knowing boy, marvellously keen-eyed and cool-headed, who executed the portrait, and sketched the career, of Lord Mounteney's man of business. There are occasional instances, too, of a ripe felicity of phrase, very different from the felicitous rhetoric of clever boys. "There is every probability of Madame de Genlis writing more volumes than ever. I called on the old lady, and was quite amused with *the enthusiasm of her imbecility*." The words which we put in italics are unusually inventive for so young an artist.

Whatever may be thought of the general features of the book, as physiognomically revealing the author, there occur expressions which, as Mr. Carlyle says, are indubitably "windows into the interior" of young Disraeli. "He,—the hero,—was already a cunning reader of human hearts; and felt conscious that his was a tongue which was born to guide human beings." "I am no cold-blooded philosopher, that would despise that for which, in my opinion, men, real men, should alone exist, Power! Oh! what sleepless nights, what days of hot anxiety, what exertions of mind and body, what travel, what hatred, what fierce encounters, would I not endure with a joyous spirit to gain it!" Some of its sentences will be considered definitely prophetic. "Of all the delusions which flourish in this mad world, the delusion of that man is the most frantic, who voluntarily, and of his own accord, supports the interests of a party." Some, it may be hoped, will turn out false prophecies. "Ambition! at thy proud and fatal altar we whisper the secrets of our ruined souls, and the sacrifice vanishes in the sable smoke of death."

The author of "*Vivian Grey*" had attained, if not fame, at least celebrity. The reputation of a daring and eccentric rhapsodist appears to have for the time contented Mr. Disraeli, and he kept it up by a series of performances characterised by the wildest literary recklessness. The "*Adventures of Captain Popanilla*," the "*Infernal Marriage*," and "*Ixion*" belong to that species of literature which Americans characterise as screaming farce. The mirth is so uproarious, the pantomime so mad, that the effect becomes oppressive. The words used by Mr. Disraeli in satirising a Whig Ministry hit off to a nicety the feeling these works leave on the mind:—"There is really too much fun in the entertainment. They make us laugh too much,—the fun is overdone. It is like going to those minor theatres where we see Liston in four successive farces." The composition of these singular pieces, however, may have had a permanent influence on Mr. Disraeli's career. They accustomed him to the use of every weapon of scorn,—the facile practice of every species of caricature. In the extremity of their extravagance they recall Rabelais. In strength of colour and limitless audacity they are scarcely beneath the mark of Swift. In Swift, however, you always have the stern sardonic grin, while Disraeli roars and laughs at all things in heaven above, and on earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth. These books suggest the infinite of irreverence. With them, though it was written a few years later, we class the "*Revolutionary Epick.*". Disraelite enthusiasts must have a fondness for this poem. It is exquisitely characteristic of Mr. Disraeli when affecting the part of inspired buffoon. Our critical acumen does not enable us to say with confidence whether it is at himself, or at his readers, or at epic poetry, or at the whole world, that he laughs in this strange performance. It was conceived, he tells

us in a pompous or mock-pompous preface, on the plains of Troy, while the eyes of the bard were dazzled by the lightnings that played over Ida. A mighty generalisation flamed at the same time along the empyrean of Mr. Disraeli's soul. All the greatest poems had enshrined the genius, the feeling, the characteristics of an age. "Thus,"—the words are from the preface,—"the most heroie incidents of an heroie age produced in the 'Iliad' an Heroic Epick; thus, the consolidation of the most superb of empires produced in the 'Æneid' a Political Epick; the revival of learning and the birth of vernacular genius presented us in the 'Divine Comedy' with a National Epick; and the Reformation and its consequences called from the rapt lyre of Milton a Religious Epick." After Homer, Dante, Virgil, and Milton, Mr. Disraeli introduces himself. The author of "Vivian Grey" and "Popanilla" begs to inform his contemporaries that he is about to carry on the succession of world-poets. Revolution is the characteristic of the present age, and the work of the modern Homer will be styled the "Revolutionary Epick." He gives the world, however, only an instalment; and he declares that, if the public decides against him, he will sing no more. "I shall," he says, "without a pang, hurl my lyre to Limbo." There is something exquisitely comical in the idea of a poet, inspired by the lightnings of Ida, informing mankind that he is to emulate Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Milton; and adding that, if he is not praised, he will hurl his lyre to Limbo. The praise was not forthcoming, and the operation of hurling was, to all appearance, performed according to contract; but, twenty years later, Mr. Disraeli published the part previously written,—with emendations.—and a number of new pages to boot. To crown the jest with a piece of incomparable but wicked drollery, he dedicated the whole to Lord Stanley! It would be pleasant to know what that statistical and prosaic minister thinks of the "Revolutionary Epick." Some of its contents will interest readers. "Magros, the genius of Feudalism, and Lyridon, the genius of Federalism, appear before the throne of Demogorgon. The plea of Magros. General view of the state of society during the last age of the Roman empire. Magros creates a new race of men. Appearance of the barbarous nations. Their invasion and conquest of the civilised world. Magros musing, listens to a heavenly chorus, which declares that Religion is natural to man. The descent of Christianity and its corruptions. Two beautiful youths salute Magros. Magros descends to earth with Faith and Fealty. They arrive at a place of ruins. . . . Faith and Fealty quit earth in despair. . . . Lyridon quits earth in despair in the reign of Nero. . . . The musings of Lyridon in heaven. . . . Lyridon returns to earth,"—with an army of printers' devils, calculated, it is hoped, to put things right. The ability of Mr. Disraeli to tread in the steps of Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Milton, and the propriety

of his fetching back his lyre from Limbo, can no longer be problematic to intelligent readers.

The best of Mr. Disraeli's earlier books is "Contarini Fleming." In 1845 he deliberately declared that, "though written in early youth," it had "accomplished his idea." It is an account, in autobiographical form, of "the development and formation of the poetic character." Reference is made in the preface to the works of Goethe, and the author lays Goethe freely under contribution for psychology, and Schiller for incident,—in neither case, however, more freely than he has a right to do. The records of his father's boyhood and youth, supplemented perhaps by those of his own, were available for the description of the reveries, the loneliness, the doubts, the brooding despair, the occasional ecstasies, of boyish genius; and in sympathetic humour, genial piquancy, and verisimilitude, nothing could excel Mr. Disraeli's management of this part of his subject. Nor are we acquainted with anything superior in the way of arch, rapid, serio-comic sketching to the narrative of Contarini's college career, with its prize essay on the Darians, its Voltairian delirium, and its episode of the bandit bivouac in the pine forest of Jonsterna. The passage about Voltaire is interesting in a biographic point of view. It breathes that fiery enthusiasm which irresistibly suggests that an author is influenced more or less by his own experience. "I stood before the hundred volumes. . . . The style enchanted me. I delivered myself up to the full abandonment of its wild and brilliant grace. I devoured them all, volume after volume. Morning, and night, and noon, a volume was ever my companion. I ran to it after my meals. It reposed under my pillow. As I read I roared, I laughed, I shouted with wonder and admiration; I trembled with indignation at the fortunes of my race; my bitter smile sympathised with the searching ridicule and withering mockery." There are touches in this book which seem to reveal the true poetic imagination. "A soft luminous appearance commenced in the horizon, and gradually gathered in strength and brightness. Then it shivered into brilliant streaks, the clouds were dappled with rich flaming tints, and the sun rose. I felt grateful when his mild but vivifying warmth fell upon my face, and it seemed to me that I heard the sound of trumpets when he came forth, like a royal hero out of his pavilion." There are, however, glimpses which recall certain views of Mr. Vivian Grey respecting the capacity of the tongue to rule mankind. "Few ideas," says Contarini's father, "are correct ones, and what are correct no one can ascertain; but with words we govern men." A hint which might be of value to the Tory party.

It does not seem to have occurred to Mr. Disraeli to try to enter Parliament until he was about twenty-eight years of age. He contested High Wycombe for the first time in 1832. He presented himself to the electors as prepared to unite the Tories and the Radicals of the place against the Whig candidate. He was proposed by a

Radical and seconded by a Tory. Mr. O'Connell gave him a letter of recommendation. He furiously attacked the Whigs. This was characteristic. It is possible to maintain that Mr. Disraeli has always been a Radical. It is true, also, that he has always called himself in some sense a Tory. But he has never wavered in his detestation of the Whigs. The exactitude and moderation of Whiggery cut him across the grain. Radicalism and Toryism were both, partly in their own nature, still more as conceived by him, indeterminate. Radicalism had room for magnificent-looking abstractions about the perfectibility of the human race, the estate of the peasantry, "the flaming morning-break of bright philosophy," and so forth. Toryism, too, could envelop itself for him in illuminated mists, and speak in swelling words. Whiggism,—precise, distinct, pointing to established facts, insisting upon logical conclusions,—he instinctively shunned. The ends of the bridge in Mirza's vision, alike involved in cloud, were what he chose. The space between, with its stable arches and firm footing, he angrily avoided.

The High Wycombites would not have him. In 1833 he appealed for their suffrages to the electors of Marylebone. His Radicalism was now decidedly in the ascendant. He declared for ballot and triennial parliaments. He would have the whole system of taxation subjected to revision, with a view to "relieving industry from those incumbrances which property is more capacitated to endure," a proposal exceedingly like that of throwing the taxes on the rich. As a general profession of political faith, he avowed his conviction "that the only foundation on which a beneficent and vigorous government can now be raised is on an unlimited confidence in the genius of the British nation." His electioneering speeches were masterpieces of broad satire and daring caricature. He regaled the High Wycombites, whose favour he sought thrice, with pictures of the Reform Ministry which will long be remembered. "The Lord Chancellor (Brougham) dragging about the great seal in postchaises, spouting in public houses, and vowed that he would write to the sovereign by the post; while Cabinet Ministers exchanged menacing looks at public dinners, and querulously contradicted each other before the eyes of an admiring nation." In still broader humour is his comparison of the Reform Minister and Ministry to Ducrow riding six horses, which are exchanged, one by one, for animals of a less noble kind. "At last, all the horses are knocked up, and now there are half a dozen donkeys. What a change! Behold the hero in the amphitheatre, the spangled jacket thrown on one side, the cork slippers on the other. Puffing, panting, and perspiring, he pokes one sullen brute, thwacks another, cuffs a third, and curses a fourth, while one brays to the audience, and another rolls in the sawdust. Behold the late Prime Minister and the Reform Ministry! The spirited and snow-white steeds have gradually changed into an equal number of sullen and obstinate

donkeys. While Mr. Merryman, who, like the Lord Chancellor, was once the very life of the ring, now lies his despairing length in the middle of the stage, with his jokes exhausted and his bottle empty!" The laugh was sometimes rather against himself. " Didn't you write a novel ? " asked an elector of Taunton, another of the places he vainly contested. " I have certainly written a novel," was the reply, " but I hope there is no disgrace in being connected with literature." " You are a curiosity of literature,—you are," continued the elector, whose name must certainly have been Weller, and whose hit, considering who had produced not only Mr. Disraeli, but other less remarkable Curiosities of Literature, was not bad. It was at Taunton that Mr. Disraeli, now crowding sail on the Tory tack, called O'Connell a " bloody traitor." As he had received marked civility from the great agitator, this was too much in the fashion of Mr. Vivian Grey, and we can hardly be surprised that O'Connell in return called him a miscreant, a liar, and heir-at-law to the impenitent thief. He at last found favour in the eyes of the electors of Maidstone, and in 1837 we find him in Parliament.

He had not intermitted his literary activity. Brilliant books, all more or less tinged with extravagance and absurdity, all marked by superlative cleverness, continued to issue from his brain. In " Venetia " he " attempted to shadow forth, though as in a glass darkly, two of the most renowned and refined spirits that have adorned these our latter days," to wit, Byron and Shelley. One or two of the scenes in which the intercourse between the boy Byron and his mother is sketched are perfect; but the book, on the whole, is beneath its subject. Mr. Disraeli does not penetrate beyond a juvenile and theatrical conception of either of the remarkable men whom he depicts, and the most laboured passages are but mock-sublime. Byron talked nonsense on few things; but there was one subject on which his talk was very nonsensical, namely, the relative merits of great poetical authors. He was an exceedingly bad critic. We are not sure, however, that his critical conversation was quite so silly as Mr. Disraeli makes it, and we cannot divest ourselves of the idea that Mr. Disraeli sympathises with his own Byron in some of his most nonsensical ideas. " Dante is national, but he has all the faults of a barbarous age." Byron, we hope, would not have said this. Of Shakspeare Mr. Disraeli makes Byron say, " I take him to have been a botcher up of old plays. His popularity is of modern date, and it may," &c. We have it from the lips of Ben Jonson that there were some in Shakspeare's day whose admiration for him proceeded, in Ben's opinion, to " idolatry;" and if royal patronage, aristocratic friendship, and realised fortune are proofs of popularity, Shakspeare, during his life, was popular. The following is in a rough way characteristic enough of Byron, or at least of one of his favourite moods of affectation. " The great secret,—we cannot penetrate that,

with all our philosophy, my dear Herbert. ‘All that we know is, nothing can be known.’ Barren, barren, barren! And yet what a grand world it is! Look at this bay, these blue waters, the mountains, and these chestnuts,—devilish fine! The fact is, truth is veiled, but, like the Scheckinah over the tabernacle, the veil is of dazzling light!” This last is a stock piece of rhetorical ornamentation with Mr. Disraeli. He treats us to it in the “Revolutionary Epick” as well as here. It is singular that Mr. Disraeli, with all his self-confidence, should have trusted himself to attempt imitation of Byron’s poetry. The circumstance would almost convince us that, shrewd as he is, and with a keen sense of the ridiculous, he has not taken his own measure. His Byronic verses are unreadably bad. You cannot get through them,—experto crede. Indeed, it is singular that, extreme as is his linguistic facility, Mr. Disraeli should fail so hopelessly when he attempts poetry. In verse, all warmth, heartiness, vitality, seem to desert him. The painting becomes Chinese, the drawing Ninevitic. His hastiest sketching in prose is better as literary work than his epic or his tragedy. The stiffness and garishness of prize-poetry,—inferior prize-poetry,—universally characterise these things. “Henrietta Temple” was the last book written by Mr. Disraeli under the pure inspiration of literature. From that time letters became with him avowedly subordinate to politics. There is, perhaps, more of real and genial power in “Henrietta Temple” than in any of his books. It becomes tedious, indeed, long before the end, and in variety of talent, and breadth and audacity of speculation, it will not compare with his political novels. But there is more heart in it than in anything else he has done. The love story is thoroughly well told, with psychological truth and a glow of genuine and intense poetic sympathy. Such delineation we believe to be impossible at second hand. The author of “Henrietta Temple” must have felt the influence of transcendent love-passion; and if so, the theory that Mr. Disraeli is one of those natures radically incapable of deep emotion,—neither thoroughly good nor supremely bad,—a Maurepas, a Calonne, a Barère,—is shown, once for all, to be untenable.

Mr. Disraeli took his seat on the back benches on the Tory side, and after making an unsuccessful attempt to gain the ear of the House, and a spirited, though boyish declaration, that he would be listened to one day, subsided into insignificance. Sir Robert Peel looked upon him coldly. It is not necessary, in order to account for Sir Robert’s shyness, to suppose, as some have done, that his “flunkies” prejudiced him against the literary portraiture of Taper and Tadpole, seeing that those famous characters did not leave Mr. Disraeli’s easel until seven years after he entered Parliament. The author of “Ixion,” “Popanilla,” and the “Revolutionary Epick,” the candidate for the representation of High Wycombe under the auspices of Mr. O’Connell, and of Marylebone in the interests of

Triennial Parliaments and taxation of the rich, was not likely to find favour in the eyes of Sir Robert Peel. Mr. Disraeli, and Mr. Disraeli alone, in the House, knew what capacity for toil, what patience in the pursuit of an object, what consummate skill in managing men, what imperturbable self-possession and indomitable perseverance, were held in reserve by this eccentric novelist. He knew it all. Quietly as the dark curls lay on the pallid marble of his brow, tranquil and unimpassioned as was his olive cheek, his eye gleamed out in conscious power and in sleepless vigilance, on the watch for an opportunity. He had to wait long before it came. It is an awkward circumstance, painfully reminding one of the political principles of Mr. Vivian Grey, that Mr. Disraeli applied to Sir Robert Peel for office, and received from the minister a no doubt courteous but decisive repudiation of services. Mr. Disraeli's panegyrist in "Blackwood" admits the fact; and liberal as he is in the use of his colours, it might have been safer for him, with a view to the glorification of his hero, to leave it out, than to try to paint it over. That Sir Robert Peel made a great mistake we have no doubt. It would have been easy for him to secure the loyalty of Mr. Disraeli; and if Mr. Disraeli had at that time been confirmed in his allegiance to Peel, there is no probability that the Tory party would have been cut down to the Protectionist rump. Mr. Disraeli remained at his post of observation. Sir Robert Peel went on his way, unconscious of the danger which lurked in the "dark lightning" that now gleamed on him from those sparkling eyes on the back bench. The future held in it for both men gladness and sorrow; but the veil was unlifted, and no human being formed the faintest surmise of what it hid.

Sir Robert Peel was a true man and a genuine Conservative;—that is to say, he was a Conservative in the sense in which Conservatism and Liberalism are convertible terms. He had not obliterated from his mind the knowledge and the conviction that the grandest elements of Conservatism are improvement and progression. He was, firstly, the servant of England. He was, secondly, the servant of the Tory party. The time came for him, as it came for Canning, and as it came for Palmerston, when intellectual keenness and moral intrepidity bore him ahead of his party. He arrived at the conclusion that an entire change was necessary in the financial policy of the country; but, in consistency with the dictates of the noblest patriotism, he clung to the ambition of carrying his party along with him, and securing their predominance in the State by keeping them in front of the national intelligence. Sir Robert Peel would fain have "educated" his party; but Sir Robert was not so adroit as a political educator whom one could name; and the philosophic student of politics must admit that it is an easier thing to educate men to relinquish their principles than to quit hold of their purse. The educational operations of Sir Robert Peel upon the Protec-

tionists were complicated and neutralised by an invincible suspicion on their parts that he wanted to get his hand into their breeches-pockets. A proud and brave man, Peel was incapable of stooping to shiftiness or artifice for the sake of place. As it gradually dawned upon the squires that he wanted to make them sell their corn at its value, not in the market of England, but in the market of the world, their wrath against him rose. Mr. Disraeli, from his watch-tower, saw the gathering storm, and became vividly alive to the advantages of the occasion. To speak of him, during those years, as a young Conservative statesman, inspired with zeal for the party honour, and inflamed with indignation at the abandonment of the party policy, is to speak what all informed men can detect to be laughable trash. Having boxed the political compass in making his way into Parliament, he was less bound by definite political convictions than any man within its walls, and was simply on the outlook for a career. He marked the exasperation of the Tory mob. He saw that they were too stupid to express in words the fury which lay in acrid foam upon their lips. Peel had repelled him, and he had probably conceived a personal dislike to the precise, methodic, ponderously heroic man. It may be pronounced certain that, if Peel had given him at an earlier period a retaining fee in form of a secretaryship, he would at this juncture have been gracefully eloquent in his tributes to the ability and the disinterestedness of a statesman who adhered to principle at the risk of alienation from party. As it was, he saw the critical moment for commencing a career. Like his own Vivian Grey and his own Contarini Fleming at the corresponding juncture, he leaped with splendid effrontery into the arena; and while the eyes of the Tories gloated over the spectacle in dull ecstasy of revenge, sent buffet after buffet with stunning effect into the amazed and staggering Peel. Sooth to say, it was a pitiful sight. Mr. Disraeli expressly acknowledged Sir Robert's conscientiousness, and no one can seriously pretend that he had himself been imposed upon by the fallacies of Protection. He therefore dashed into a parliamentary position by discrediting the noblest thing that has been done in our recent political history; and he used the wedge of spite to deepen into irreparable severance what might have been, and what ought to have been, a mere temporary estrangement between Sir Robert Peel and the less intellectual portion of his party. If any one maintains that Mr. Disraeli then really believed in the Protectionist views which he championed, we beg that this Nathaniel will consider what, according to "Blackwood," those views were. Lord Derby and his set, we are told, were of opinion that the Government, instead of opening the ports to admit foreign corn, in order to avert extremities of famine in Ireland, ought to have let corn in Ireland rise to famine prices for the sake of the farmers, and to have employed the population, which would

otherwise starve, on public works ! Was there ever a period, since he was out of his teens, or into them for that matter, when Mr. Disraeli was capable of following Lord Derby and "Blackwood" in the belief of economical vagaries so infantile as this ? Mr. Disraeli probably did nothing worse than most young men of the world, burning for opportunity, conscious of genius, urged on by personal pique, and not clearly or completely foreseeing the effects of their conduct, would have done ; but when, many years after, grave writers speak of the "recreant Peel" and the "young Conservative statesman" who attacked him, we must protest against such insufferable cant. The leadership of a party was never more trivially won or more basely given ; and if the Tories, in following Mr. Disraeli, have found themselves in antres vast and deserts idle, in wilds and jungles and inextricable bogs, now making ducks and drakes of all that was left of Protection, and now racing madly with Radicals in Parliamentary Reform, — if the simple-minded Conservative, under instruction by Mr. Disraeli, has often found himself in the unutterable perplexity of the ingenuous student in "Faust" when listening to a discourse from Mephistophiles disguised as his professor,—if Conservatives who saw their party honoured throughout Europe when led by those consummate men of action, Wellington and Peel, have looked in vain for constructive capacity to the brilliant talkers, Mr. Disraeli and Lord Derby,—let them find what consolation they can in the reflection that they abandoned a noble chief, and sold themselves into bondage and bewilderment, for the vile bribe of revenge.

From the day when the Protectionists organised an opposition and called themselves Tories, Mr. Disraeli has been the soul of the party. Judiciously and patiently allowing the nominal leadership to be held by some one who could blind steady-going Conservatives to the fact or extent of his power,—Lord George Bentinck, it might be, or Lord Derby,—he has been the guiding spirit of the host. His leadership has been characterised by indefatigable devotion to party interests, great parliamentary tact, vigilance that never relaxed for a moment in watching the turns of the game, invincible temper, unpauseing activity, and a conspicuous and deplorable absence of constructive capacity. His measures have either been appropriations from the Liberal repertory, extravagances which were laughed out of existence as soon as seen, or bills cut out originally on a Tory pattern, but botched and patched by order of Liberals and Radicals until the originals had vanished as completely as the original of the Irishman's fifty-times-mended coat. His India Bill No. 2, which, according to Lord Palmerston, threw the town into uncontrollable fits of merriment, might afford ground for salutary reflection to Tories, when compared with the legislative masterpieces of Wellington and Peel.

From the time when Mr. Disraeli entered Parliament, literature

was, we said, subordinate with him to politics. He did not, however, lay aside his pen. In 1844 appeared "Coningsby," in 1845 "Sybil," in 1847 "Tancred." These may be styled the three most remarkable political novels in the English language, which indeed is not rich in this department. In each and all the story is in some parts slight, in some parts wearisome, in some parts melodramatic; but genius burns like lambent flame over all their pages; and in felicitous snatches of dialogue, in hearty fun, in satirical etching of society, in insight into character and knowledge of the ways of the world, they are decisively inferior only to the work of the few highest English novelists. In choice of incident and tone of thought and feeling, they have a mellowness which favourably distinguishes their execution from that of his earliest books. Rigby, Taper and Tadpole may be regarded as additions to that select number of fictitious personages who have fairly lodged themselves in the general memory and imagination, and will remain there. The characters of Lord Monmouth and of his nephew, Coningsby, are admirably discriminated, and the scene in which the youth announces his political heterodoxy to his uncle has been much and deservedly commended. Mr. Disraeli's style, though rich, forcible, imposing, and variegated, is never specifically an English style. It reads like a splendid translation from a foreign tongue. Turn from him to any of our characteristically English writers, to Paley, to Scott, to Thackeray, to John Henry Newman, and you cannot fail to perceive that his sentences have not the native idiom and home-bred colour. His ear has never thoroughly caught our island tune.

But the three works named are important chiefly on account of the speculative opinions which they contain. "Coningsby" is the authoritative book on Young Englandism and the resuscitated Tory party; "Sybil" is wildly democratic, and cannot, to our thinking, be intelligibly interpreted and reasonably accounted for except on the supposition that its author was then bidding, or contemplating a bid, for the leadership of the Chartist; and "Tancred," which appeared at the moment when his energies were being finally absorbed in the leadership of the Protectionists, contains the full statement of those views on the character, history, and destiny of the Hebrew race, which had been slightly indicated in "Coningsby," and which are explicitly adopted in the biography of Lord George Bentinck. It is a curiously interesting circumstance, and one respecting which there can be no doubt whatever, that the Prime Minister of England, the chief of a Tory Cabinet, has repudiated and condemned all that is fundamental and essential in the existing British constitution. He expressly declares in "Coningsby" that Parliamentary Monarchy and Parliamentary Church have been a dead failure. "The first has made government detested, and the second religion disbelieved." Are not these words, uttered by their leader,

enough to strike Tories dumb? There is not a vestige of evidence that Mr. Disraeli has modified the opinion they express. The tenacity of his race, the stubbornness of his character, his superb confidence in himself, his infinite disdain for the commonplaces of British patriotism, render it morally certain that he has not modified them. The scheme to which he unmistakably leans is that of imperialism. "The only power that has no class sympathy is the sovereign." "The proper leader of the people is the individual who sits upon the throne." Viewed in connection with those unparalleled manœuvres of last session, in which Mr. Disraeli seemed to aim at pledging the sovereign personally to an adoption of his policy, and which startled, amazed, and incensed the House of Commons, these words are painfully suggestive. We cannot, however, believe that Mr. Disraeli is capable of literal political insanity and actual political suicide. What we are as sure of as we are of the latitude of London is that, if Mr. Disraeli seriously tries at this time of day to put into practice Bolingbroke's foolish theory of a monarch emancipated, in whole or in part, from the control of Parliament, he will in a twinkling find himself sent again to his seat on the back bench, and will be able to accommodate his entire party in the seat in question. Space fails us to examine in detail Mr. Disraeli's sweeping generalisations. They are stated with an air of assurance and an oracular pomposity which strike the greener mind. They rise before the eye like the mountains, trees, and cataracts in a piece of theatrical scene-painting. Viewed from a distance, seen through the glare of the lamps and the glimmer of the footlights, they seem wondrously true to reality. But when you go nearer, the illusion vanishes. The waving foliage becomes a vague breadth of green paint, the cascade a daubing of flake white, the mysterious mountain a raw patch of indigo. Mr. Disraeli's grand theories are all of this sort. To use his own words, they present merely "that maudlin substitute for belief which consists in a patronage of fantastic theories." The faithful student of Mr. Disraeli's works is rewarded by meeting with exquisitely clear and happy expressions to define and condemn Mr. Disraeli's defects.

We must close this article without saying nearly all we intended to say; but one word we will add. Of all the solecisms recorded in history, none was or is more glaring and portentous than that such a man as Mr. Disraeli should be the Conservative Prime Minister of Great Britain. He is the least conservative member of the House of Commons.

[To be continued.]

LIFE STUDIES.

No. III.—THE ADVENTURER.

I AM tolerably well acquainted with most of the cognate cities of Europe, and I have never sojourned in any of them without chancing upon some men,—say six, or eight, or ten,—who knew every one, went everywhere, and yet whose personal history was a thing totally unknown to all around them. Whom they belonged to,—what they had been, or where,—what means they possessed, and whence derived, were all matters hidden in the deepest obscurity. Though these people might be supposed to herd together, and make a sort of common cause of the way they invaded the world, they were remarkable for the very avoidance they showed of each other, and a cold reserve in all intercourse, the very opposite to that they extended to society in general. Was this policy, or was it simply the natural dislike men feel to those who want to walk the same narrow path as themselves? I am not prepared to say,—but I suspect that both of these motives were in play. It is a strange fact,—and that it is fact I appeal boldly for confirmation to all who have mixed freely in the world,—that no society was ever sufficiently select to exclude these men altogether. That you have them, not singly or in twos or threes, but largely in London life, will not be denied. Indeed, I believe that they enjoy a safer, surer, and more protected position in England than elsewhere, and that not unreasonably. We are so weary of each other, or we affect to be so, in our English life, so ineffably impressed with the barrenness of existence, as though it were a thing we had all lived over before, and despaired of finding anything new or of interest in it, that we need people who feel, or pretend that they feel some amusement in life; and as our cooks deal with the raw materials of food, and render them pleasant and palatable to us, so do these men manipulate the topics of the day, and make the “Times” digestible to us, and pick the plums out of the “Pall Mall” for our eating.

In Paris also are they found, even in the Faubourg; strait-laced and suspicious as it is, it has its quota of these unknown quantities. That they abound in the Imperialist circles is no wonder; indeed, the difficulty there is rather to say who is not the Adventurer. Orleanism has also a fair share of them, and certainly the most personable specimens. Vienna, of all cities, is the most difficult of approach to them; for here it is not merely that exclusiveness is based on caste,

and caste does not mean merely birth and blood,—but it implies catholicity of the purest kind, and traditions of papal intolerance and bigotry not only for ages past, but in all lateral connections and relationships. But besides these, there must be interminable intermarriage, so that society takes the form of the family with all its intimacy, all its intermeddling, all its pressure, and to say truth, scarcely one of its pleasures. Into this charmed circle Adventurers seldom venture, but they are not totally excluded from it either. Even within that sacred union, where archdukes are addressed with the "tu," and archduchesses called by Christian names, these men have penetrated, and incredible as it may seem, opinions of other countries, and judgments on London, Paris, and St. Petersburg, have their origin in the influence that these outsiders have acquired in the most frigidly select set of any city of Europe.

If you are ever sorely puzzled to know whether a man be an Adventurer or not,—whether he mixes in society on good and sufficient grounds, or is there on sufferance, through an accident, or by a fraud, there is one test I have never known to fail. And bear in mind detection is not the easy thing you may imagine it,—for these men are very clever fellows, keenly alive to the difficulties around them, and ever watchful not to betray themselves by even a passing indiscretion. The test, however, which there is no escape from is, to bring them into close contact with some man admittedly and avowedly an Adventurer,—one whose riding or whose billiards, whose tenor voice or whose hand at whist, or rather whose mastery of all these together, have floated him in a sea he was not native to; submit your suspected man to a mere introduction to one of these, and if he does not show the uneasy consciousness of confederacy,—that innate sense of such brotherhood as never quits the knave, amounting to a positive aversion to be seen with the new man, or exchange greetings with him,—if, I say, he be proof against these, he is either a master of his art or an honest man.

They are, for the most part, consummately clever fellows, fighting the battle of life without any of those aids of family, fortune, connexions, or recognised position, by which other men with whom they mix, are surrounded. There they are,—their very host does not know why, nor does their excessive deference to him explain it;—for they are not, at least in the common acceptation of the term, parasites. No; their tone is a sort of easy familiarity, as though their presence needed no explanation. They were there because they were everywhere, and being everywhere, and knowing in consequence everybody, to assail them was to attack an institution.

Neither was it that their social qualities gave them the entry,—for so far as one could see, they rather traded on the repute than on the exercise of these. "Villars could do that stroke," or "Stanley would make that mare go quietly," you might hear; and be it observed that

they rarely bear less noble names, not the least shrinking from those invariable questionings of "What Howards are yours?"—"Are yours the Conway Seymours?" Not that they fear such inquiry. Sir Bernard Burke could no more pose them in a genealogy than he could follow them across country.

They know a great deal more than most men of what goes on in the world. They are keen watchers of the game,—which it is their good or ill luck never to play,—but they are little given to impart their knowledge in talk, and never do so by letter. Indeed, a certain sententious reserve is all-essential to them. They may be believed to be cautious, even to distrust, but they must never be supposed to be uninformed.

Their philosophy seems to be this. Every rich man has a great deal more of everything than is needed for his own consumption,—just as he has far more sunshine than he can possibly require; but as he has not,—partly from indolence, partly from indifference, partly because it never struck him,—any thought of extending these benefits to others, it behoves the others to avail themselves of these blessings quietly, noiselessly, unobtrusively, as though it were the merest accident in life who was the Duke and who the Adventurer. Habit has so trained them to a certain style of living. They commit no solecisms, and make no mistakes. They are as much men of large fortunes, great households, and splendid establishments, as the first and greatest of their hosts; and if it came to a criticism on a *suprême*, or a case of Burgundy, very few indeed of these same hosts would dare to pronounce so authoritatively, and very possibly not so well. For it is wonderful what these men, who have neither cellars, nor stables, nor kennels, know of wine, horses, and dogs.

By a sort of quiet pressure they keep up a continual insistence of their theory of life, which amounts to this;—In the well-bred world all men are equals. You may have a splendid fortune, a town-house, a stud, a yacht, a villa at Sorrento, and a fishing-lodge at Tronhaken,—and I, none of these things; but so long as I know the enjoyments these gifts confer, so long as I feel, and intensely feel what pleasure can be extracted from them, not vulgarly and coarsely, but largely, generously, and intellectually, making of them sources of charming acquaintanceships, and even of friendships,—I am no more your inferior than is the man who holds a weak hand at whist below his partner who has got all the honours;—for even my small cards are of use, and the game cannot go on without me.

Last of all, who is to say what the next deal may bring forth? The Duke may be cleaned out by a Derby, and the Adventurer become a land-owner.

FRENCH PLAYERS AND PLAYHOUSES.

A SHORT time ago there appeared in this magazine an article on the present condition of the English stage. The aspect of our drama is gloomy enough, and there appears to be no prospect of a break in the heavy clouds, or of the dense fogs clearing off. But our English dirty weather seems duller still when we contrast it with the fine, clear, dramatic skies of our neighbours. In France the theatrical ground seems to bloom with verdure, to flower with new, and ever-varying, shapes of flowers and plants, with a tropical luxuriance of leaves, plants, and greenery ; and though the abundance is almost rank, the prospect is delightful to the eye. In our poor histrionic ground,—true bad land,—a few dried shrubs enjoy a sickly and stunted growth : the foliage is as meagre as that of a Dutch garden, with its stagnant little canal and plaster temple.

To sit on one night, as the writer did lately, in a stall of a Paris theatre, and on the next in that of a London one, affords the most curious contrast conceivable. You pass at once into a new order of things ; and the interval is so short, you seem to travel straight from one playhouse to the other. The general superiority of the French stage is usually conceded ; but it is hardly credible that the superiority could be so marked,—a superiority extending to the theatre, scenery, and actors ; the chief and most striking feature of the English playhouse being a certain meanness, poorness, and even squalor in all things appertaining to the theatre. This observation may lead us to consider a few of the influences which seem to promote the superiority of the French stage. In matters of the stage these influences act wholly apart from the important elements of plays and of acting. The drama entering as it does so largely into the life of the Frenchman,—that is, of the Parisian,—the plays even being *read* by a public as large as the one that listens and looks on,—it is felt that this important sweetner of life should be treated handsomely. It is well known that the State does this officially. The people are invited to recognise and respect the stage as a great profession, and can scarcely help doing so. The very buildings preach this recognition. The British play-goer generally makes his way to his favourite house through some mean back street, and reaches at last a shabby barn-looking edifice that seems to skulk away from public notice. If it be in some more respectable street, its individuality

is lost,—it is absorbed into the houses adjoining, or squeezed between its bourgeois-like neighbours. It seems as though some remnant of persecution attached to the builders of theatres, and that, like the professors of proscribed faiths, they dared not challenge public attention by the ostentatious erection of a building for their worship, but were obliged to adapt and alter, unobtrusively, whatever structure they could get. In this shamefaced, half-apologetic fashion many of our London theatres seem to ask toleration. In the provinces they almost invariably lurk and loiter in the very ghetto of the town. Above all, but too common, is the mean and sometimes noisome alley of access by which the players have to creep into their building. All this is but some half-remnant of the old squirearchical or magisterial theory that players were rogues and “vagabones,” and were to be dealt with as such; and perhaps, too, of an existing impression, that the profession of a player, in a broad view, belongs to an inferior caste. It is not too much to say, that a great deal of this feeling is owing to this mean housing of the drama,—these shabby buildings and mean quarters,—this hiding out of sight.

A broad, on the contrary, what does the State do? It pitches on some open Place with a commanding position, and raises thereon a solid, handsome, spacious, showy, architectural pile. We can walk round it; every side has features of its own. We ascend to it by steps. It is an object,—a landmark, as it were,—that has been built by the town, and has cost about as much as a Royal Palace. In France there is actually a style of architecture for the theatres, and, side by side with all the new Parisian improvements, there have risen noble theatrical structures, vast and massive outside, whose name the stranger is sure to ask. On the Quai, the great houses of the Châtellet and the Lyrique face each other with a wide, open space between, with handsome façades, and with that honest, self-asserting air of being a theatre, which foreign houses have. Our theatres, when they make any architectural pretence at all, try something in the shape of a poor sham portico or a scenic front, which, architecturally, is neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. Round the French playhouse, on the lower story, runs the bright café, crowded between the acts, where the bell from the stage rings to give notice that the play is about to begin. There, too, is the bright door, labelled “Entrance for the artists,”—not in a mean alley, but opening on the broad street. And artists,—the invariable title,—is a much more complimentary name than stage-players, as actors used to be contemptuously termed with us. Even about the older French playhouses there is a stately palatial air, a little old-fashioned and rusted, but not in the least wanting dignity, as, for example, in the theatre at Marseilles, and in the French Opéra Comique and the Français,—that model of a stately theatre. But even in the last century the rules that should guide the building and arrangements of a theatre had been

carefully studied by the French architects, and we can find, by turning over the wonderful volumes of the Encyclopedia, most elaborate plans, drawn to scale, for all the different kinds of theatre. But the most perfect homage to the dignity of the stage is found in the new French Opera,—the most gorgeous temple in the world, vast, enormous in its proportions, almost barbaric in its magnificence,—rich in gold and bronze, and crusted over with precious marbles. This noble pile, placed on the most precious spot in the capital, where every inch of ground might be covered with napoleons, is an almost monumental proof by which our gay neighbours wish to proclaim to the world their respect for the dignity of the great art. And the artists who are attached to the service of such splendid temples must be proportionably ennobled. This public recognition, then, seems to be an important reason for the superiority of the French stage; a recognition much more substantial than our old, poor title of His Majesty's Servants, which was in reality intended for anything but a compliment. In France the comedians of the King, or of the Emperor, or of the Republic, are in the service of the State, as much as the soldier and the sailor; and when their term is complete, the State takes care of them with a substantial pension.

Another substantial reason for the superiority of the Gallie stage is to be found in the national character, which is eminently histrionic. In a French conversation, a French speech, a French sermon even, there is always present an eternal vivacity, a gay helping out of the thought with other aids besides that of the voice,—aids which are quite as potent, namely, gesture, expressions of the eyes and face and, above all, of the shoulders. Then, too, there is the pleasant esprit,—wit almost,—the constant lurking insinuation, in lieu of plain statement, which lies at the bottom of true acting. The half undomestic life of the Frenchman, which sends him so much abroad of nights, renders him more exigeant as to the character of the pastime on which his entertainment so seriously depends.

Again, too, it must be said that the French artists are a superior class to the English players; superior in tastes and accomplishments. Their tastes, habits, mode of life, everything, are superior. Their pastimes and accomplishments would amaze our English players, and perhaps excite their contempt. They are nearly all collectors, and what are called in France "amateurs." Thus M. Grivot, of the Vaudeville, is fond of etching, and is curious in bronzes. St. Germain collects rare books. Desrieux delights in pottery, and people go to see his specimens of old faïence ware. The more famous Doche has an exquisite little museum of rare Dresden and dainty curiosities. Kopp, one of the droll coterie in the Grande Duchesse, has a collection of pictures worth 80,000 francs. Las-souche, of the Palais Royal, collects china. One actor has a collection of clocks of Louis XIV.; another, a choice little cabinet

by Meissonier ; a third is a good sculptor ; a dozen paint landscapes, nearly all are musicians, and most play on the violin. As for the actresses, it is not too much to say that every second one sings skilfully, and plays the pianoforte as a matter of course. Many French actors write elegant and lively verses,—“proverbes” sometimes,—which they act for their own amusement. All this betokens a refined tone of thought. The directors of the theatres are very often skilled and successful dramatists, and more often still trained and refined critics, who have served an apprenticeship on influential papers. The green rooms are not like ours, bare, unfurnished apartments, but noble salons, full of busts of great players and dramatic authors, covered with pictures of scenes from great plays by great artists, furnished with presents from the kings of France. As we look up from the street between the acts, we see these attractive salons, and know that the artists who are entertained therein cannot but respect themselves and hold their profession respected.

But, above all, the French stage is superior, because its plays are superior. French play-writers are artists, with a most delicate touch, and a skill in construction that is almost instinct. They give their actors characters to act ; the actors give them in return a rich store of spirit, vivacity, and abundant detail of humour ; and player and writer act and re-act upon each other. How firm the touch, how elegant the treatment ; nothing is ponderous, nothing laborious. And this, too, is the secret of their success. They hold up the mirror to their own curious social life ; at night the Frenchman in his stall sees reflected to him the oddities of the day,—what might have happened and has happened. We adapt these trifles, and the result is a burlesque exaggeration,—not founded on reality, and unsuited to an English audience who have no social standard to measure it by. Long ago, when the English dramatist took a simple and original course, and despised his neighbours too much to borrow or adapt from them, his pieces were real, living, and, what was better, amusing and entertaining. It is surprising that the incompatibility of these French plots, or more properly French équivoques, with English customs and manners, should not be perceived. Take, for instance, the well-known little sketch of the five or six young ladies expecting a gentleman visitor, of whom they have great hopes, and who at last arrives with rather showy dress and manners. Later comes the piano-tuner, a retiring, quiet gentleman, who remains in the background, as suits his supposed position, and of whom only the amiable girl of the party takes any notice. After an extravagant display of devotion to the showy gentleman, and a corresponding contempt for the other, it comes out at last that the tuner is the real gentleman, and the showy one the tuner. This little trifle will, of course, find its way to the English boards, but we can conceive under what disguise,

and in what heavy native buckram. It will not bear transplanting; for the situation is French, and might occur in any of those Parisian flats, where there is a common staircase, and people are going up and down constantly. But, when the piece comes to our boards, the tuner will enter as Twingles; the gentleman as Mr. Fitzpoppet. We shall have a bevy of the boisterous young ladies attached to the burlesque, and an additional Betty or Mary as comical household housemaid to rush in and cause fright, and introduce comic "concealing business,"—in the piano perhaps,—by the news that "Missus is comin'!"

That there is a difference between French and English playing will be conceded, and that the superiority lies with the French, will likewise be admitted by all, save the members of the British branch of the profession. The reason is because we are, in familiar phrase, moving on another tack. It may be profitable, therefore, to institute a comparison between the two systems; and the most agreeable way of doing so would be by investigating a few of the more recent and notable successes on the French boards. Of the *Français* piece, Paul Forrestier, little can be said, save that it has the conventional French immorality which might seem bad enough; but it is dull, which the French would consider worse. Not so the acting, which is admirable. We see in it the admirable Favart,—rather passée now, but full of repressed passion, and who, when she gives way to a burst, shows that she is struggling to keep back as much passion as she expresses. This is the true theatrical art of indicating rather than expressing emotion. Our actresses might learn from Favart this disciplined fury, this suppressed agitation, half-revealed in eyes, mouth, figure, attitude,—in short, in the way in which injured and outraged mothers and wives display their feelings in an ordinary drawing-room or parlour. With her black dress and pale face she gives us the look of shrinking terror. With her we have the torrent of words, stumbling and tripping over each other; the unconscious retreating and cowering,—not the stage stride; the tying and twisting of the handkerchief,—in short, the life-like air which must come from the fact of the actress dismissing all conventional stage associations, and fancying she is in some real situation. Happy is the *Français* in its young lover, Delaunay, handsomest of adorers, who looks about twenty, and whose cheeks are not blue from excessive shaving; who walks like a gentleman, and is exquisitely dressed. So with the no less admirable Göt, his rough honest friend, who is in love with the same lady. Never did stage lover play his rejection so admirably. The look of perplexity and distress, the not knowing what to say,—the attempt to speak and make a last appeal, the going to the door, the general uncertainty,—were points new, and drawn from the great volume of human nature. Why that volume, so cheap, accessible, and translated into

every language, should not be in the hands of our English players is incomprehensible.

The French romantic melodramas,—where love, passion, fighting, adventure, hair-breadth 'scapes, handsome men and women, and fine dresses and scenery, all flash before us,—have a certain charm and fascination; but they have a charm in their own country which they lose when transported to us. When deformed and adapted to the English stage, they want the link of sympathy; for they are wholly French,—in character, manners, epoch, and adventure itself. They reflect the romantic sentiment of the country, which has a corner in the breasts of the most practical and mercantile among Frenchmen. The French public, like the gallery of a transpontine theatre, admires and weeps over representations of self-devotion, self-sacrifice, the rescue of unhappy ladies, and the satisfactory punishment of aristocratic and heartless assailants of female virtue. In this class of piece the story is usually drawn from French history or romance, and the mirror is, as it were, held up to French nature in the house. There is, therefore, a true rapport between actor and audience such as we in England have not. Again, we have not the true hero of romance,—the noble melodramatic lover and fighter, with a handsome face, a good figure, and an interesting and heroic carriage and demeanour,—and, above all, with a melodious voice, and that demi-chant, musical and melancholy, which is almost "de rigueur." Over French melodramatic pieces,—extravagant, far-fetched, as they are too often,—there is spread a charm which always interests. But it is grievous to think that even this *spécialité* is beginning to disappear. We think of the old Porte St. Martin and its glories,—that wonderful playhouse run up, some forty years ago, in a few weeks to serve as a temporary booth until a new and more enduring structure should be got ready, and which has flourished ever since,—and of its long line of glories. No theatre could boast of such an important series of plays, which have left their mark on the French drama. The Tour de Nesle, the Chiffonnier, Belphégor, the charming Victorine, Le Bossu,—which is our Duke's Motto,—the Vautrin of Balzac, and Richard Darlington, are only a few among the list. But the mantle,—if a theatre has a mantle,—of the old Porte St. Martin has been contemptuously thrown off, and picked up by a newer and more gorgeous house,—the Châtelet. There we can see the villain's career worked out steadily with dignity and due magnificence. This noble building is noted for its perfect arrangements, its enormous coulisses, where the mechanical resources stretch over a vast deal of ground, and where the joke runs that the stage-manager rides about on horseback to give his orders. The house is famous for having the best theatrical orchestra in Paris, directed by one of the Chéri family; and let it be said that, for a stately and pathetic melodrama, a full orchestra,—rich in melodious airs, that can give out broad and flesh-creeping chords,

is absolutely essential. A vast amount of really good orchestral music may be noted as one of the many strong points of the French stage.

At the Châtelet we have the *Vengeur*, of which so much was talked before it was ready, and which was considered a fiasco when it did appear. It scarcely deserves such a condemnation, and seems an interesting and romantic piece, catching happily enough the tone of the period described. On the London stage we fancy ourselves tolerably familiar with the Revolution, and there is no period which the regular costumier could mount so readily. Yet something more is needed than tricoloured sashes, and top boots, and high-collared coats, and allusions to Mussier Robespierre and Darntong. In the *Vengeur* a tone of heroic sacrifice is present throughout, and the characters are played in a natural, unstagey way, which imparts an air of perfect reality. The piece turns on the nautical side of the Revolution. A young sea-captain, pursued by a vindictive rival, and separated from his sweetheart, finally sacrifices himself for her sake, and goes down on board the *Vengeur* in the fashion in which the original vessel did not go down. This hero was played by a handsome man, with a musical voice, in whose bearing and face it was impossible not to feel an interest. He seemed at home, also, in his dress,—one of the points in which our native actors are deficient; and indeed I find it noted, by an acute critic, to the praise of the famous Bressant, that “he seemed to carry every suit of clothes he put on as if it was his ordinary dress.” We, who have seen artists in our own land in Louis Quatorze dress, or, worse, in a dress evening suit of the day, know what a divorce seems to exist between the clothes and their wearers, and what an amount of buckram is present for which no tailor is responsible.

The scenery of this piece, too, suggests a reflection. It is commonly said that in that department, at least, “we beat the French,” and proof is instanced in the scenes of Alhambra transformation pieces, which have been sold to French theatres. But this is altogether a mistake. In a landscape,—in effects with the lime-light, in transformation devices, in mechanical changes, in colour, our superiority may be admitted; but in purely picturesque effect,—in the tone of a scene and the conception,—the French artists show they are our masters. They have the touch. Thus, at the beginning of the *Vengeur* there was a scene in old Paris,—a lonely street, admirably broken up with Gothic houses and porches and effects of shadow; and over all there was a tone of tranquil mystery thrown, as though the times were those of danger and plots. The red cap business and sabot-clattering was not overdone, as it would have been near home. The colours were all subdued. There was a pleasant comic underplot turning on the embarrassments of a portly barber. One scene in this

piece shows in a small way how perfectly the French understand the true principles of fun. The barber has been induced to let his shop for a few hours to a stranger, who affects to have some eccentric aim, but in reality is a Royalist conspirator who wants the place as a rendezvous. The barber has no business himself, and chuckles over having taken in the stranger. Almost at once a customer arrives and wishes to be shaved. Then another, and another,—in short, a legion of conspirators. The amazement of the barber at this sudden influx of custom was admirable; but not less admirable was the bearing, the supremely natural manner, of the strangers, mere supernumeraries, with only a sentence to say, but who actually seemed to be what they represented,—people coming in from the street.

Later in the piece there came a scene representing the deck of a man-of-war of the old pattern, which to those accustomed to our theatrical decks, to Black-eyed Susan, and even to the Africaine at Covent Garden, must have been startling,—so picturesque, so really original, was the whole conception. Instead of going straight back, the ship ran diagonally across the stage. There were sails, masts, cannon, portholes, cabins, all indicated with that touch which is so much more valuable and effective than the mere servile reproduction, or fac-simile making, which seems to be the fashion on our stage. Then followed a Chant du Vengeur,—a fine and spirited scene, grouped with surprising taste and effect, and with a middies' dance,—wonderful in spirit and originality. The last scene,—the sinking of the vessel,—was a surprising triumph; and though vessels rolling on a practicable sea are familiar enough now, even this was done in an original way, and on true stage principles. At a certain London theatre there was given lately a piece in which there was a ship also, on whose deck the characters were to talk and move about. The vessel had to strike a rock and go down slowly with all hands, the soldiers standing gallantly to their post, refusing to save themselves before the ladies. The main deck and fore deck were both brought in. There was a sail set, and the whole was considered a triumph of mechanical skill. Yet nothing more journeyman-like or untheatrical could have been conceived. The vessel, as it stood on the canvas waters, was about the size of a small yacht. The figures of the actors were about three times the height of the hull of this large troop ship; and though the heroine came up,—with difficulty,—through a little hutch that was called a cabin, and was made love to by the lover, the helmsman, who was turning a practicable wheel, about a foot off, heard every syllable, there being no room for him to get farther away. Such is the result of realism. The true principle of theatrical effect is to convey the idea of size, which will make a deeper impression than size itself. Now this Vengeur ship illustrates the difference. They only brought

on a portion of the vessel. One half was under the rolling waves,—the half nearest the spectator. We saw the whole width of the deck; at the stern, high in the air, a huge stump of a mast banged to and fro, the hull itself rolling and getting deeper in the water every moment. There was very little more superficial space used in this vessel than in the English yacht before described. Yet the effect was overpowering.

Now we change the scene to the gay temple of the *Variétés*,—pleasant, and festive, and inviting in its very name. Even in these names of French theatres we may see the nice logical accuracy and love of distinctions which allot to each house a separate department. These titles are for the most part a little grotesque, and, as denoting the class and quality of piece performed, contrast curiously with those of the London houses, which take their names from their street or quarter. The *Variétés* has been tolerably constant to its special department. When the history of the French theatres comes to be written, a large space must be given to the work of OFFENBACH, the pleasantest tune-writer of the day. For, after all, the great crowd must have its tunes to whistle and sing, as they work, or lounge by, or drive their carts; and though our music-hall songs are becoming as necessary to the public as its penny paper, Offenbach is valuable,—precious even,—as supplying a far higher class of commodity. We may call his productions trivial, light, frothy; there is a certain attraction about them, a sparkling gaiety and life, which makes them acceptable.

It would be hard indeed, now to look for what can be called true burlesque. A pleasant delusion exists that we are in possession of it, and the confiding believer in the prosperity of the British drama points triumphantly to theatre after theatre playing Mr. Byron's and Mr. Burnand's popular burlesques for month after month. Yet these pieces are utterly outside the realms of true burlesque. They are, indeed, excellent and amusing shows; and for those who are contented with troops of handsome women, whose dresses,—or at least the folds of drapery attached to their figures,—are of the richest material,—with fine scenery, with violent dancing, with female characters played by men, and male characters by women, with the slang songs,—brought in without even appropriateness,—with contorted puns, and a story so dislocated as to be almost unintelligible,—for them there is abundant entertainment.

A good while ago, before the run of the existing school of farce had set in, Mr. Montagu Tigg gave a dinner-party to Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit, at which a guest, called Mr. Pip, quoted the opinions of a theatrical viscount on the decay of the drama: “What's the good of Shakspeare, Pip? . . . There's a lot o'feet in Shakspeare's verse; but there ain't any legs worth mentioning in Shakspeare's plays,—are there, Pip? Juliet, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, and all the rest of

'em, whatever their names are, might as well have no legs at all, for anything the audience know about it, Pip? What's the legitimate object of the drama, Pip? Human nature. What are legs? Human nature. Then let us have plenty of leg-pieces, Pip." The noble viscount's taste, a little singular then, was soon to be gratified; but he could hardly have dreamed that the exhibition of human nature, in the shape of leg-pieces, was to become so universal.

Than true burlesque nothing is more amusing; and the French are tolerably near to the correct standard. The true secret of burlesque consists in artfully developing the subject to be ridiculed into extravagance, without leaving out what may be called the unconscious element. For this is one of the highest triumph of ridicule, to show that the object laughed at is unaware that he is causing merriment. Tried by this test, we see at a glance how our burlesque actors start at the outset on wrong principles. They come forward as titular buffoons,—not using the word in its offensive sense,—and create convulsions of laughter by absurd and grotesque gesture, grimace, and speech. At every motion they seem to say, "How funny, how comical, I am exerting myself to be!"

Then again for the story. In a burlesque of classical incident, for instance, it is necessary to consider, first of all, that the outline only of the story is familiar to the bulk of the audience, and that the whole event is so remote as to be cast in the dim and uncongenial mists of supernatural history. There exists an element of absurdity in the mere revival of old-fashioned habits and manners and almost incomprehensible modes of thought, just as a street crowd will laugh at a foreigner, his dress and ways. If, then,—assuming that human nature is the same in every age, heathen as well as Christian,—we convey that there were men and women acting then, much as men and women do in our time, and find the solution, as it were, of the legend in the simple motives, the meannesses, or little passions of our own time, the result becomes surprising and diverting to the highest degree. This, it would seem, is the true meaning of burlesque, and, tried by this test, it will be seen how widely the most popular pieces have diverged from such a plan. Thus Perseus and Andromeda, Sappho and Paris,—and a hundred such have all passed over the only means by which true fun could be extracted from such a dry storehouse as Lemprière, and have fallen back, as we have seen, on dances and dresses and good looks, things which by repetition must grow monotonous. There is nothing surely appropriate in Venus or Juno, or all the gods together, bursting into a breakdown; it is, in fact, discordant with classic story. If we were to point to one English piece which is a perfect burlesque, we should name M. Planché's Medea, with Mr. Charles Mathews playing in it. There we have the true principle applied. Medea behaves as a termagant mother

of the nineteenth century would do in corresponding circumstances ; but the most exquisite part of the whole is the reproduction of the functions of the chorus, who are viewed precisely as some irreverent Greek jester of the time might have been inclined to describe them. Those who have pored over the Greek plays have often smiled over the comments and interruptions of these solemn fuglemen. It became impossible to shut out speculation as to how the thing would work. Were they professionals ? how did they look ? did they rehearse these interruptions ? how much had they a week ? &c. As we sit and look at M. Planché's piece, we actually seem to get a glimpse of the truth,—though an absurd one,—and the whole leaves a sense of fun and relish of enjoyment so lasting as to linger in the mind for years.

The French, too, are in possession of the secret, as may be witnessed in the *Belle Hélène*, or in a character or two of that piece. A leading figure is, of course, Calchas, the high priest. Under English treatment the point would be to extract as much fun from him as possible, by giving him artificial corpulence, an artificial nose, and vast spectacles. In fact, on such principles a heathen clergyman was thus dealt with not long ago on the stage. A vast umbrella was placed under his arm, from which he never parted, and by whose aid he performed the most grotesque dances. But the French Calchas drew laughter from deeper but more inexhaustible wells. With true native profanity, he transformed the heathen priest into the modern clergyman : at every turn came out the French ideal,—for such it is,—of the modern sacerdotalism. A thousand little touches pointed at this. Above all, there was worked out a smug air of comfortable imposture, such as the heathen priest would have borne to a sharp-eyed sneering Greek, who saw through the trickery. The exquisite reality of the whole,—the character of Calchas, his snuffiness,—the snuff not being taken in that noisy conspicuous way which belongs to the English stage, but in a corner, as it were, in a greasy comfortable enjoyment,—his stoop and walk, and his imimitably sly revelations of disbelief in the imposture he was carrying on,—the contrast of this vivid every-day portrait to the old heathen accessories and dresses,—the undereurrent of hints conveyed, that these old pagans were mumming and theatrical, even in their helmets and dresses,—all these refined touchings conveyed an idea of burlesque exquisitely mirthful.

Another point to be considered is the suitability of any story for travestie. Mr. Burnand's *Ixion* is perhaps the best specimen of modern English burlesque, and, in the main, is treated on something approaching the true principle. But the incorrigible individuality of our actors interposes here, as usual,—the piece must give way to them, not they to the piece, and the whole is overlaid and contorted with inopportune buffoonery and inconsistent tumbling. A subject for burlesque should be familiar to the public mind, yet not one that

has been reverenced. The climax of absurdity,—of sheer desperation from want of a subject,—was reached in the late parodying of a melodramatic novel, with which the public had not had time to grow acquainted, and which some said verged on burlesque itself. The basis of successful burlesque lies in the thing thus treated being as familiar as a household word.

In the *Grande Duchesse* we again find that admirable actor Christian, in a part so totally distinct from his ordinary impersonations as to give us the effect, as it were, of its being acted by another person. For the intellectual comic actor has an immense advantage over the player whose stock of humour is made up of contortions, and grimaces, and a peculiar twang of voice. The former, when he takes up a new character, depending on his mind for capital, has whole warehouses that are quite inexhaustible,—“his mind to him a kingdom is.” It is not too much to say that the *Grande Duchesse*, as acted at the *Variétés*, is, for mere fun and comic acting, the choicest treat the playgoer has had for many years. A better representative piece of the French school could not be selected, as showing how much is gained by the wholesome subservience of the actor’s fun to the fun of the drama; and almost too much credit has been assigned to Schneider’s share in the performance, too little to the admirable and self-denying artists who played with her. Nothing could have been more perfect than the graduated tones of buffoonery amidst the actors, each in his degree and according to his station, never obtruding, but always heartily co-operating. The story is, of course, familiar to most people, the aim being to present a caricature of the absurd relations growing out of the life of some tiny German court. From the beginning to the end, every one was in earnest. The exaggerated but infinitely comic general, the foolish prince, and the stolid Fritz, gave but the very faintest indication,—an aside to the audience, as it were,—that they were fooling. The story went forward with a purpose that was almost stern. Even the extravagances of the heroine were prompted by the supposed high spirits of the young duchess; and the absurd taste for dancing which seizes on all the characters seemed rather a frantic spirit of enjoyment to which the wisest might be subject, than organised histrionic buffoonery.

OTHER HABITABLE WORLDS.

Not many years have elapsed since Whewell, in "The Plurality of Worlds," and Brewster, in "More Worlds than One," respectively oppugned and defended the belief that there exist other inhabited worlds besides our own earth; yet so many and such important discoveries have been made in astronomy and physics during the interval, that the question which was at issue between Brewster and Whewell may be said to have assumed in the present day a totally different aspect. The invention of a mode of physical analysis, the powers of which seem absolutely incredible to any one who is unfamiliar with the laws on which they rest, has enabled the modern physicist to answer some of the very questions respecting which Brewster and Whewell were at issue. It is not a little remarkable to find that, in a controversy in which both disputants were so able, one has been shown to have been wholly in the wrong in nearly every speculative argument adduced in support of his views. It would almost seem as if there were some truth in the view which was put forward during the progress of the controversy, that Dr. Whewell was but half in earnest. We propose to discuss, very briefly, the more important of the discoveries referred to above, and then to consider the evidence we have respecting the habitability of certain members of the solar system.

One of the arguments on which Whewell laid most stress was founded on our want of knowledge respecting the constitution of the celestial bodies. We know nothing, he reasoned, even respecting the substances of which our own moon is constituted, and this body is but a quarter of a million of miles from us. What, then, can we ever learn respecting the constitution of bodies which are many millions,—in some cases, hundreds of millions,—of miles removed from us? For aught we know, not one of the elements which exist on our own earth is present in these distant globes. Nay, he even ventured to express positive opinions respecting the immense difference which he assumed to exist between several of the celestial bodies and our own earth. He held that Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are but "immense clouds," or "water and vapour packed into rotating masses." The asteroids he held to be "mere shreds and specks of planetary matter,"—"watery globes, with perhaps a lump, or a few similar lumps, of planetary matter at their centre."

In expressing the opinion that astronomers could never obtain any certain knowledge of the constitution of the celestial bodies, Whewell

can hardly be said to have been unduly confident. Even his opponent concurred with him here. Brewster held, indeed, that the physical constitution of some, at least, of the other planets may resemble that of our own earth; but he was compelled to acknowledge that his views could never be established by positive arguments. He held that they were more probable than Whewell's, and that was all he ventured to say for them.

And, indeed, if we consider the subject a little attentively, we cannot but feel that no scientific man could have hoped, with any show of reason, for positive information respecting the constitution of the celestial bodies. One might almost as well have hoped that it would one day become possible to communicate with the inhabitants of these outer worlds. A certain philosopher once said, jestingly, that if there be inhabitants on the moon, we might interchange ideas with them respecting mathematical problems, by means of trees planted in geometrical figures. "For instance," he said, "we might construct in this way a figure illustrating the famous forty-seventh proposition of Euclid, and wait until the lunarian geometers showed by some corresponding labours their appreciation of our mathematical acquirements." Ridiculous as this notion may appear, it certainly does not seem more absurd, at a first view, than the expectation that, by any processes man might invent, he could learn the physical constitution of bodies even more distant than the moon,—that he should be able, for instance, to assert with the fullest certainty of conviction that enormous quantities of iron and copper exist in the sun's mass.

Yet it is precisely such knowledge as this which has been deduced from the application of the wonderful method of research termed "spectroscopic analysis." Many of our readers are doubtless familiar with the principles involved in this great invention. MM. Kirschhoff and Bunsen were the first to show that the lines which cross the streak of rainbow-coloured light termed the prismatic spectrum, indicate with the utmost certainty the character of the vapours through which the source of light is shining. This, indeed, is only one of the points established by their researches. It is the one, however, with which alone we are at present concerned. No dubiety can be attached to the law thus laid down. It has been tested by the most refined chemical experiments, and has become recognised in turn as the most certain mode of chemical analysis. But now consider how extensive is the application of this law. Whatever objects are luminous can be examined and tested by means of it. It does not matter how near or how far off an object may be;—it may be in the physicist's own room, or it may be a few miles off, or it may be removed by those inconceivable distances which separate the celestial bodies from us;—it is equally available for spectroscopic analysis.

The evidence supplied by this powerful analysis affords a very complete and satisfactory reply to Dr. Whewell's argument. The rain-

brown-coloured streak of light which forms the solar spectrum is crossed by hundreds of fine lines,—here separated by well-marked intervals, there clustered together with almost inconceivable closeness. It is evident, therefore, that the solar light reaches us through a very complex atmosphere. And when these lines are compared with the lines of the various terrestrial elements, it is found that many of the most important of these certainly exist in the solar atmosphere. Other terrestrial elements are probably present, but some of their fainter lines are not seen; and the lines of some elements are wanting altogether. We are not, of course, to assume that those elements are wanting whose lines are not seen; because if any element were present in small quantity its lines would be proportionately faint. We find, indeed, a certain correspondence in this respect between the solar constituents and those of our own earth. Iron is present in large quantities as an element in the earth's composition; and we find the iron lines in the solar spectrum so strongly marked that no doubt whatever can exist respecting the presence of enormous quantities of iron in the solar atmosphere. The same remark applies to sodium, magnesium, calcium, and other elements. But gold and silver, mercury, antimony, arsenic, &c., which are so much less common on our own earth, have not yet been detected in the solar atmosphere. Copper and zinc, which are moderately common terrestrial elements, are found to exist in the solar spectrum, but in less quantities than iron, sodium, magnesium, and calcium, since the fainter lines of the two former elements are not noticeable in the solar spectrum.

We need hardly point out how largely the discovery that terrestrial elements exist in the sun modifies the views we are to form respecting the constitution of the planets. As the planets are opaque, we cannot tell what elements exist in their substance; but when we know that the great centre of our system is formed of the elements which constitute our own earth, we are justified in accepting as highly probable the opinion that all the other planets are similarly constituted.

But this is far from being all. The range of the spectroscope extends beyond the centre of our own system. Unlike the telescope, which can do simply nothing with the fixed stars,—revealing them, indeed, with heightened splendour, but affording no indication whatever of their true nature,—the spectroscope tells us more about them than we could have hoped to learn even of our nearest neighbour, the moon. We obtain, in fact, precisely the same sort of evidence respecting the stars as we have already had respecting the sun, with this important difference in the evidence itself, that whereas the sun exhibits a close affinity to our own earth as respects the proportions which exist between its elementary constituents, the stars,—centres, doubtless, of other systems,—exhibit no such affinity. It may seem rashly speculative to found a theory on this evidence alone; but we cannot but regard it as a legitimate deduction that, in all probability, all the

members of a planetary system circulating around any star are similarly constituted, and that the nature of their common constitution is exhibited by the spectroscopic analysis of their central sun.

But there is evidence of yet another kind to show that the elements we have been in the habit of speaking of as "terrestrial" exist in other parts of the solar system. Although meteoric stones, or aërolites, have fallen on the earth at intervals during many hundreds of years, it is but recently that the scientific world has accepted as indubitable the fact that these stones are really visitants from the interplanetary spaces. Now that this fact is recognised, the chemical analysis of aërolites becomes the chemical analysis of portions of the solar system. "There is an interest attached to aërolites," says Humboldt, "wholly different from that connected with any other objects of astronomical or physical research, inasmuch as by means of them we are brought into contact, so to speak, with external space, and are permitted to weigh, to handle, and to analyse masses not belonging to our terrestrial formations." The analysis of aërolites exhibits to us the same fact which has been revealed by the spectroscopic analysis of the sun. We find that the very elements which are most common on our own earth occur most commonly also as components of meteoric stones. But, remembering that the stones which reach the earth are few in number compared with those which are wholly dissipated in the upper regions of air, the inquiry is suggested whether we cannot learn anything respecting the structure of these objects also. They are luminous through intensity of heat, and therefore they are suitable objects of spectroscopic analysis. But the difficulty is to view them with a spectroscope during their hasty swoop across the sky. Patient observers have, however, overcome this difficulty; and although it is impossible to obtain a well-defined spectrum from the light of a shooting-star, yet it has been found that certain elements which happen to have well-marked lines, and notably sodium,—which, it will be remembered, is one of the elements most plentifully distributed throughout the solar atmosphere,—exist in the masses of these wandering and minute members of the great planetary family.

Another argument on which Dr. Whewell laid great stress was founded on the doubt whether any planet has an atmosphere resembling that of our own earth. Astronomers had been led to suspect that most of the planets,—if not all of them,—are surrounded with atmospheric envelopes of some sort; but there was no certainty on this point, and far less respecting the constitution of the planetary atmospheres. Here was another negative argument, which it seemed wholly impossible that men should ever be able to oppugn satisfactorily. Yet here again the spectroscope has afforded the clearest evidence. We have said that, the planets being opaque, it is impossible to learn in what manner they are constituted. But we can learn,—or, at least, there is a possibility of our learning,—

whether the light reflected from a planet's surface has passed through an atmospheric envelope; for, if the planet's spectrum is crossed by dark lines, not existing in the solar spectrum, these lines must be caused by vapours existing either in the earth's atmosphere or in the atmosphere of the planet; nor is it so difficult as, at first sight, might be supposed to determine in which of the two atmospheres those vapours exist. In observing the planet Mars, Mr. Huggins noticed that the spectrum was crossed by a number of lines which appear in the solar spectrum when the sun is low down, that is, when his light passes through the denser strata of our atmosphere. Now, although Mars was not so low down as to suggest the probability that the lines were caused by the earth's atmosphere, yet it was not wholly impossible that they might have been, because the constitution of the atmosphere, as respects the amount of aqueous vapour present in it, &c., is not absolutely constant. Therefore it did not become certain that the vapours indicated by these lines exist in the atmosphere of Mars until the following crucial test had been applied;—The spectroscope was directed towards the moon, then lower down than Mars; so that if the vapours were due to the earth's atmosphere their lines must have been more strongly shown in the moon's spectrum than in that of Mars. But they were not seen in the moon's spectrum. Thus it was proved that there is a Martial atmosphere, and that it is loaded with the very vapours that are found in the earth's atmosphere.

It has been shown that the same vapours exist, also, in the atmosphere of Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn; but their lines are not quite so distinctly seen as in the spectrum of Mars,—for this reason, probably, that the light received from the former planets is not reflected from their true surface, but from vaporous masses floating above the denser atmospheric strata. Thus the light has traversed a smaller quantity of these characteristic vapours, and their lines are proportionately indistinct.

Sir David Brewster laid great stress on the analogy between the planet Mars and our own earth. He pointed to the continents and oceans of the ruddy planet; to its snow-crowned poles; to the clouds which float in its atmosphere; and to numerous other analogies which mark it as well fit to be the abode of creatures resembling those which exist on our own earth. Dr. Whewell was not ready to admit that all these analogies really exist. He argued that what we call continents and oceans may not be so; and that it is assuming too much to say that the white specks of light which cap the Martial poles are certainly masses of snow and ice. On these points recent discoveries do not speak quite so positively as on the others. But this has been done; it has been shown that the so-called lands and seas are permanent features. They have even been charted and named, and a globe of Mars has been constructed. It has been shown that the red colour of the "continents" is not due to the Martial atmosphere. The

waxing and waning of the polar snow-caps have been more carefully watched than before, and found to correspond closely with the progress of the Martial seasons. Then, as we have seen, the existence of aqueous vapour in the Martial atmosphere has been established, so that we cannot doubt that water exists on Mars in large quantities. And, lastly, clouds, covering extensive regions, have been observed to melt away with the progress of the Martial day, exactly as the morning mists are dissipated by the heat of one of our summer days. The words applied by Brewster to long past ages of the earth's history will at once suggest themselves as applicable to the planet Mars. If, indeed, this orb be uninhabited, then it exhibits to us physical relations "fulfilling no purpose that human reason can conceive; lamps lighting nothing; waters quenching nothing; clouds screening nothing; breezes fanning nothing; and everything around, mountain and valley, hill and dale, earth and ocean, all meaning nothing."

But perhaps the most important of all Whewell's mistakes was his assumption that the climate of each planet must necessarily correspond with the planet's distance from the sun. He argued that Mercury and Venus must be as unfit for habitation, through excessive heat, as Jupiter and Saturn through excessive cold. He drew, in particular, a dismal picture of the climatic relations presented by the giant planet Jupiter, an orb which exceeds our earth more than thirteen hundred times in volume, and outweighs all the other planets, taken together, more than twofold. A dismal mass of snow and ice, clothed in perpetual fog, with perhaps a cindery nucleus,—such was his picture of that magnificent orb, the centre of a system whose motions have formed for three centuries a subject of study and contemplation for astronomers.

The labours of Professor Tyndall and his compeers have shown that it is quite impossible to judge what a planet's climate may be from the mere consideration of the planet's distance from the sun. The extent and quality of the atmospheric envelope around a planet exercise fully as important an influence on the planet's climate. The sun's heat may either be retained or radiated away as fast as it is received. If a planet has an atmosphere which is always loaded with aqueous vapour, the heat poured on the planet passes freely through this vapour to the planet's surface; but it does not pass freely away again; it is retained and stored up precisely as in a glass-house. But dry air has not this power; the reflected heat passes as freely through it as the heat directly received from the sun. There are vapours and gases which have yet more power than aqueous vapour in preventing the escape of heat. Amongst these are the gases emitted from flowers; and Tyndall estimates that "a layer of air two inches in thickness, and saturated with the vapour of sulphuric ether, would offer very little resistance to the passage of the solar rays, but would cut off" more than one-third of the rays which would other-

wise pass away as soon as received. "It would require no inordinate thickening of the layer of vapour," he adds, "to double this absorption; and it is perfectly evident that, with a protecting envelope of this kind, permitting the heat to enter, but preventing its escape, a comfortable temperature might be obtained on the surface of our most distant planet." When we remember, on the other hand, that during the full heat of the tropical summer the lofty slopes of the Himalayas and the Andes remain covered with snow, we see how largely a diminution in the extent of a planet's atmosphere may diminish the effect of the sun's heat. And precisely as our countrymen in India find in the Himalayas the climatic relations of the temperate zones, so the inhabitants of Venus and Mercury may enjoy a climate as genial as that of our own earth.

We know so little of the planet Mercury that it would be idle to discuss at length the physical relations presented by this small globe. The same remark may be made respecting the distant planets Uranus and Neptune. No telescopes have sufficed to supply any positive information respecting the surface-contour and other physical relations of these important members of the solar system. We shall, therefore, confine the remarks we have to make respecting the habitability of planets to the four orbs, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

If we were to accept Whewell's method of reasoning, and assume that where any one of the principal physical relations presented by our own earth is wanting, a planet is not habitable by beings resembling those which subsist on the earth, we should be compelled to pronounce at once against the habitability of the above-named planets. For it happens that although all these relations subsist severally in one or other of these planets, they do not subsist collectively in any one of them. In Venus we find the following features wherein the planet resembles our own earth. In volume Venus and the earth are nearly equal. They differ little in density; and the attraction of gravity is appreciably the same at the surface of either. The day of Venus is but a few minutes shorter than our day. Her year consists of only two hundred and twenty-five days; but this is a comparatively unimportant point. We have seen, also, that the effects of her proximity to the sun may be counteracted by a suitable diminution in the extent of her atmospheric envelope. So far, then, there is little which need render Venus a habitation unsuited to the wants of man. But, if the observations of the few astronomers who have attended to the point may be trusted, there is one feature of the habitudes of Venus which must cause a marked difference in all her physical relations from those which prevail on earth. It is estimated that her axis is bowed more than three times as much to the plane of the ecliptic as that of the earth. Thus her tropics extend nearly to her poles, and her arctic regions nearly to her equator. An inhabitant of Venus must have but a poor choice

of climates if his requirements resemble those of the inhabitants of earth. If he lives near the equator, he has, during spring, a climate resembling our hottest equatorial weather; but, at the seasons corresponding to winter and summer, the sun scarcely rises fifteen degrees above the horizon. If he lives near the poles, he has to endure an intensity of heat in summer such as we can form but a faint conception of; for the sun will appear to circle around the zenith without setting for weeks together. On the other hand, he has to endure in winter a cold far more excessive than that of our bitterest arctic winters; for not only is there perpetual night around him, but the sun never even approaches his horizon, revolving always close around that point which is immediately beneath his feet. Lastly, if he lived in either of the wide zones,—comprising more than half of the planet's surface,—which are at once tropical and arctic, he would suffer, within the short year of two hundred and twenty-five days, all the vicissitudes of the extremest terrestrial climates.

Thus it appears that, except near the equator, none of the races of men could exist on Venus. For although there are men who live and thrive under the influence of our fiercest tropical heats, and others who endure without injury the bitter cold of arctic winters, yet, certainly, there are no races of men, and but few individual men, who could long survive the rapid alternation of these extremes.

It must be mentioned, however, that many astronomers are very doubtful whether the axis of Venus is really situated in so remarkable a manner. Venus is a planet very difficult to observe satisfactorily; and we must be prepared to look with extreme diffidence on all observations which deal with so difficult a matter as the determination of the planet's polar position. Modern observers of the highest repute,—such astronomers as Hind, Sir J. Herschel, Dawes, and others,—have expressed the opinion that the old astronomers were mistaken in many of their supposed discoveries respecting Venus. And certainly, if the exquisite instruments of the present day, in the hands of practised observers, fail,—as they have hitherto done,—to afford any evidence confirming the old estimate of the planet's position, we may assume that this element can no longer be looked upon as determined.

We know more of the planet Mars than of any other member of the solar system. He does not, indeed, approach us quite so nearly as the planet Venus, but he is seen under much more favourable circumstances. Venus at her nearest approach presents her darkened hemisphere towards us; and at all times, as already mentioned, the peculiar brilliancy of her light renders her a very difficult object of observation. With Mars it is otherwise. He not only turns a fully illuminated disc towards us when he is nearest, but he alone, of all the planets, has an atmosphere so constituted that we can examine his real surface. We have already seen in how many respects the physical relations of this planet resemble those of our own earth. There are other

points of resemblance, however. The inclination of his axis differs little from that of the earth's axis, insomuch that his seasons closely resemble those of the earth in character. His day is about forty minutes longer than our own. His year, however, is different, being nearly twice as long as ours. One can hardly imagine that vegetation on Mars can resemble terrestrial vegetation when his seasons exceed ours so much in length.

But, perhaps, the point in which the physical relations of Mars differ most markedly from those of our own earth, is the nature of gravitation at his surface. Mars is a much smaller planet than the earth; and as his density differs very little from that of the earth, it follows that gravitation at his surface is much less than at the earth's. A man who weighs ten stone on our earth would weigh less than four on Mars; and our Bantings and Lamberts would be light active fellows, seven or eight stone or so in weight. All substances would be similarly reduced in weight. Martial gold would be no heavier than terrestrial tin, Martial oak than terrestrial cork, and so on. Whewell, in his Bridgewater Treatise on Astronomy, is disposed to attach great importance to the exact relation which subsists between the force of gravity and the motions of vegetable juices. If this view is correct, it is certain that none of our plants could thrive on the soil of Mars. However, we think that those who appreciate the power by which nature adapts the various races of plants and animals to the soils on which they subsist will be unwilling to see anything in the habitudes of Mars to render that planet uninhabitable by races resembling,—though not actually identical with,—those which subsist on the earth.

The chief arguments for the habitability of Jupiter are founded on his enormous magnitude, and the magnificence of the system which circles around him. It seems difficult to imagine that so grand an orb has been created for no special purpose, and it is equally difficult to conceive what purpose Jupiter can be said to fulfil unless he is the abode of living creatures. He is, indeed, an object of wonder and admiration to our astronomers; but the mind must be singularly constituted which can accept the view that Jupiter was constructed for no other end. When every object around us suffices to exhibit the omnipotence of the Creator, we require no such evidence as is afforded by a globe exceeding the earth 1,300 times and more in volume. The light afforded to us by Jupiter is so insignificant, also, that we cannot suppose him to have been created for no other purpose than to supply it. His influence in swaying the planetary motions is important, and he also appears to have a noteworthy influence on the sun's atmosphere; but neither influence seems necessary to the well-being of the inhabitants of earth. Thus we appear forced to concede that Jupiter has been constructed to be the abode of living creatures,—unless we suppose that his function is to sway the motions of his satellites, and that these satellites are inhabited. Without deciding

between these two views, we proceed to point out those points in which the physical relations exhibited by Jupiter differ most markedly from those of our own earth.

The enormous volume of Jupiter is in part counteracted,—so far as its influence on the inhabitants of Jupiter is concerned,—by the small density of the planet, insomuch that the attraction of gravity at his surface is not so much greater than terrestrial gravity as might be supposed. Yet it exceeds the latter more than twofold; so that the weight of an inhabitant of our earth would be increased in about the same proportion if he were removed to Jupiter as it would be diminished if he were removed to Mars. The lightest men on our earth would find themselves as unwieldy as our Lamberts and Bantings if they were placed on Jupiter's surface. We are compelled to recognise in this circumstance a peculiarity which would render Jupiter unfit for beings constituted exactly like the inhabitants of earth; but modifications not much more marked than those which distinguish the various species of the same genera on earth would be sufficient to enable terrestrial races to endure, without discomfort or inconvenience, the powerful gravitation experienced by the inhabitants of Jupiter.

The day of Jupiter is less than ours in the proportion of about two to five, while his year contains nearly twelve of ours. His axis is so nearly perpendicular to his orbit that there are no appreciable seasons on his surface. This circumstance has been pointed out by some astronomers as a convenient offset against the effects of his enormous distance from the sun. But it will not do to dwell too strongly on this point, since we find no such arrangement in planets which are yet further removed. The small density of Jupiter's substance led Whewell to pronounce the planet to be a fluid mass; and Brewster was at some pains to deal with the peculiarity. He endeavoured to show that Jupiter might be formed of solid substances, because there are such substances on earth of even less specific gravity than Jupiter's. However, the possibility that Jupiter's sphere may be hollow, so that the density of the substances actually composing his mass may be much greater than his mean density, is sufficient to remove any objection to the habitability of the planet founded on this peculiarity alone.

In many respects the physical relations of the planet Saturn correspond closely with those of Jupiter. There are, however, two points of difference. In the first place, gravitation at his surface is far less than at Jupiter's, and differs so little from terrestrial gravitation that we may look on this relation as one with respect to which Saturn is perfectly well fitted to support terrestrial races. On the other hand, the influence of the Saturnian ring-system would be so unfavourable to most terrestrial races, that one can hardly suppose but that Saturnian races are constituted very differently from those which subsist on our earth. It results from a careful examination of the effects of the two gigantic rings which surround Saturn that the sun is

totally eclipsed by them for years together in the temperate and sub-tropical zones of Saturn ; and that in Saturnian latitude corresponding to that of Madrid the total eclipse lasts for more than eight years.

It appears to us that a careful consideration of all the evidence must lead to two conclusions :—First, there is an obvious adaptation of the physical constitution of the planets we have been considering to fit them to be the abodes of living creatures ; and secondly, there are obvious reasons for doubting whether these living creatures can very closely resemble terrestrial races.

To some minds it may appear that to discuss the fitness of the planets to be the abode of living creatures different from those which subsist on the earth is altogether beside the question we are dealing with. The habitability of the planets, many argue, means their fitness to support terrestrial forms of life. But this view appears to us a mistaken one. If indeed it can be shown, that, in any planet, not one of the physical relations subsists which we hold to be essential to the existence of terrestrial races, then indeed it seems idle to speculate upon the general question of the habitability of that planet. For instance, when we consider the case of the moon,—without air or water, subjected to a scorching heat during its long day of half a month, and to a corresponding intensity of cold during its equally long night, and that it is in other important respects utterly unfit for habitation by terrestrial races,—we seem little encouraged to discuss how far the moon may be fitted to support other forms of life, since nothing in our experience enables us to conceive what forms of life could possibly exist in so sterile an abode. But when we find in certain planets an obvious provision made for the support of forms of life corresponding to the forms existing on the earth, we seem to be justified in recognising and discussing the habitability of these bodies.

And this leads us, in conclusion, to point out a mistake which is commonly made in the application of that argument from the analogy of our own earth, which those who believe in the habitability of other worlds justly use. We cannot reason from the fact of the earth's habitability to the habitability of the other planets. We might as reasonably argue from the presumed unfitness of the moon for habitation that the other celestial bodies are also uninhabited. But we can derive a powerful argument from the analogy of our planet when we consider the economy of life upon its surface. When we see the scorched regions of the tropics and the solid ice within the arctic circle freely supporting terrestrial races, while not only the continents, but the depths of ocean and the realms of air are crowded with living creatures ; when we find that in long past ages, during which different physical relations from the present have subsisted, the same abundance of life has existed on the earth's surface, we may fairly assume that the planets which present so many physical relations resembling those of our earth are not untenanted by living creatures.

THE RED ROSE.

ONE day, as from my bed I went,
I saw one stand before the door,
Whose hands a bough of blossom bore,
Snow-white, and very sweet of scent.

His visage was full grave and sweet,
And awful as the morning-red,
When in the east the night is dead,—
And lilies grew about his feet.

His hair was of a tender gold
As cowslips in the early spring,
And clad his shoulders, ring on ring;
It was full pleasant to behold.

White roses in his arms he held,
And snow-white roses round his head;
But on his breast one rose was red,
As if his heart's-blood there had welled.

And in one hand a lily-bell,
That garments of fair silver wore,
And burnt red-golden at the core,
As 'twere the sun therein did dwell.

“ Sir,” said I, “ if I may be told,
What is the meaning of these flowers,
Whose like ne'er drank the spring's soft showers,
Nor ever grew on hill or wold ? ”

“ These are the roses of the city
Of God, and eke of Christ,” he said,
“ That erst in crimson were arrayed,
But now are turned all white for pity

“ Of human dolour, and compassion
For blindness of mortality ;
But in this other that ye see
The hue, in token of Christ’s passion,

“ Remains that men may, in its sight,
The blood shed for them have in mind,
And in its bloom fair hope may find,
And in its smell may have delight.

“ For this red rose I bear is Love,
That sweetens life and healeth pain,
And thereto should all things be fain,
And set its sweets all sweets above.”

“ Sir,” said I, “ if I may be told,
What is that lily that is dight
With leaves of such a lovely white,
And at the heart is burning gold ? ”

And he, “ This is the sign of death,
That is outside both white and cold,
But at the core is burning gold,
And holdeth store of fragrant breath.

“ Choose which of these thou willest take,
For the dear God, in heaven that lives,
Such grace unto all mortals gives,
For Christ, His Son’s, belovèd sake ;

“ That each may once within his life
Make choice of roses red or white,
Or lily with the heart of light,
To solace him in pain and strife.”

And I, “ Sir, sorrow is enough
Within this life and world of ours,
And death comes with the evening hours,
And so I choose the rose of Love.”

Whereat my hand I stretchèd out
That lovely crimson bloom to bear
From him, and in my bosom wear ;
But lo ! my hand drew back in doubt

Which it should take ; for that one rose,
 That in the wreath of white was red,
 Had wasted all its lustihead,
 And had put on the hue of those

That were upon the bough y-sprent,
 And these, in stead, to crimson turned,
 As 'twere new fire within them burned ;
 And to the lily there was lent

A flush of colour ; so I knew
 Not which was lily nor which rose,
 Which was the blossom that I chose,
 So like a bloom on each one blew.

Then to the bearer, "Sir," said I,
 "Who art thou that, as no man may,
 Dost make these colours change and play,
 So that their semblants mock the eye ?"

And he, "I draw no mortal breath :
 The Lord, in heaven that reigns above,
 Did give to me the name of 'Love,'
 But oftentimes men call me 'Death.'"

And as he spoke, his seeming fled,
 And melted into empty air,
 And I into this world of care
 Went with knit brows and drooping head.

And as among the folk I walked,
 Along wide place and sunny street,
 Meseemed mine eyes did often meet
 His form with whom I late had talked,

As in the ways he went and strewed
 White flowers and red with viewless hands ;
 And often in my dreams he stands
 Before me, as that morn he stood.

J. P.

PROVINCIAL JOURNALISM.

THE Eatanswill Gazette probably realises the conception which suggests itself to most of our readers at the sight of the title with which this article is headed. It has been the fortune of the author of the Pickwick Papers to associate the names of many of his characters with certain trades and pursuits. You can hardly enter on a popular discussion on the merits or demerits of the law without encountering allusions to Serjeant Buzfuz and Mr. Justice Stareleigh, to Sampson Brass and Mr. Jaggers. The Brothers Cheeryble represent the common-place idea of high-minded commerce ; and the names of Stiggins and Chadband have been a stumbling-block to many generations of Scripture readers. Just in the same way the feuds of Mr. Pott and his brother editor, the warfare between the Gazette and the Independent of Eatanswill, have contributed to form the views which ordinary people take of provincial journalism. The sketch of the animosity which reigned between the local newspapers of Eatanswill was undoubtedly a caricature ; but still,—like all caricatures that live,—it preserved a certain resemblance to the object depicted. The misfortune is that the public has taken a life-like caricature for an accurate photograph. What the character of provincial journalism is, what are its proper functions, and how far it fulfils them, are points on which I shall endeavour to express my own views, based as they are on considerable personal experience of, and practical acquaintance with, the subject of this inquiry.

In common parlance all journals not published in London are called provincial. It is a fact that of all countries in the world with which the writer is acquainted England is the one which possesses the nearest approach to an imperial press. It may be owing to the homogeneousness of our country; it may be due to the density of our population compared with the exiguousness of our territorial area; it may be from the extent with which the face of the land is covered over with railroads, but the fact remains that not only is the press of London the chief press of the country, but that there is no local press which succeeds in,—or even aims at,—representing the public opinion of its particular district. Every local newspaper does undoubtedly represent some party or interest in its locality. But if you wished to learn what are the sentiments of the average public, even in such remote districts as Cornwall or Northumberland, you would be more sure of finding them represented in the metropolitan

journals than in Cornish or Northumbrian newspapers. We are speaking, let it be remembered, of the opinions entertained in these and similar districts on general, not on local, matters. Thus we come upon the odd anomaly that London, the greatest city in the world, has absolutely no local press of any weight or significance, and yet that its newspapers are virtually the newspapers of the whole of England, not to say of Great Britain and Ireland. Something of the same kind is to be found in France, but, as far as we are aware, in no other country of any size. In Germany the *Kölnische Zeitung* may possibly have a wider circulation and possess more influence than any other local journal, but it differs in no essential characteristic from the *Vienna Presse* or the *Nord-Deutsche Zeitung* of Berlin, or the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of Augsburg. In Italy, the *Florentine Nazione* has the weight due to considerable ability of management, but it has no more pretensions to represent the Italian nation than the *Perseveranza* of Milan or the *Nazionale* of Naples. So also in the United States. Foreigners are apt to ascribe to the New York papers something of an imperial character. The assumption is so far right, that if there was an imperial press in the New World it would be that of the Empire City. But, as a matter of fact, each State, or each group of States, has its own papers. The only difference is that whereas you occasionally meet with New York papers out of the New York district, you never meet with those of other districts beyond their respective areas. But within their areas, the Boston and Chicago and Richmond and Cincinnati papers are as sovereign and independent of each other as the journals of Liverpool and Manchester and Bristol.

Thus in England the provincial press has to work and exist subject to the condition of taking no important share in, and exercising no considerable influence on, questions of imperial importance. On the eve of a ministerial crisis, or on the morrow of a decisive division, it is the custom of the London papers to publish extracts from some of the leading provincial journals as indications of the feeling which the question at issue has excited throughout the country. But this custom is due rather to traditional usage than to the absolute importance of the organs whose opinions are thus brought before public notice. Every statesman or politician with whom public life is a profession, is compelled to keep himself "posted up" in the views expressed by the leading metropolitan journals. But not even the most zealous of officials deems it necessary to study the views of the ablest provincial journals, unless he happen to be personally connected with the particular district in which some one of these periodicals is published. This dictum of ours, with reference to the essentially local character appertaining to our provincial press, applies with more or less force to the whole of the United Kingdom. The chief Edinburgh and Dublin and Manchester newspapers would doubtless resent our assertion; and it would be

absurd and unjust to represent papers like the *Scotsman*, *Saunders's Newsletter*, and the *Manchester Examiner*, as standing in the same category with the *Stoke Pogis Mercury* and the *Chatteris Courier*. Yet the difference between them, if we may venture to speak the truth, is one of degree, not of character. The local affairs of Manchester are infinitely more important to the community at large than those of Little *Peddlington*; the weight of public opinion in the Modern Athens is far more potential than that of *Aylesbury* or *Henley-upon-Thames*: and therefore papers, discussing the politics of *Cottonopolis*, or the opinions of "Auld Reekie," possess an importance not given to journals, the subject matter of whose discussions are the squabbles and news of *Ashby Parva* and *Willoughby-the-Less*. But yet we may venture to say that upon imperial questions the direct influence of provincial journals is nil. Indirectly, of course, they may do good and valuable work, by stimulating within their own district the growth of the convictions or beliefs, the aggregate mass of which constitutes public opinion. But when that opinion is formed, it does not fall to them to express it. They are no longer,—they are never likely to be again,—the mouth-pieces of public opinion; and this truth holds good from the Land's End to John-o'-Groats.

The importance of Provincial Journals, from the organ of public opinion point of view, varies inversely with the distance of their publishing places from the metropolis. The most perfect specimens of the *Eatanswill Gazette* genus are probably to be found amidst the parochial papers of the *Pimlico Patriot* order, which profess to give the local news of some London district. The highest specimens of provincial journalism are to be found in cities which even in these days of express-train travelling can only be reached from London after a journey of many hours. Any person who has been in the habit of travelling much about England, and who is at all of an observant turn of mind, must have noticed that at a certain distance from London, especially on the northern lines, you get out of the region of London newspapers, and find that the papers chiefly sold at the stations, or read in the trains, are those of the district through which you are passing. The truth is, that with the help of a *Bradshaw*, you may determine with almost absolute certainty, the area within which London newspapers have a large chance sale, to adopt a stock term of the newspaper trade. Owing to the real or supposed requirements of modern civilisation, it has become an absolute necessity for every man who takes an active part in life, to see a daily newspaper at breakfast time. Now all the London dailies are printed at some hour between midnight and daybreak, and are forwarded into the country by the first trains which leave the metropolitan termini. At all points which are reached by these early trains by breakfast-time, or thereabouts, the local newspapers are driven out of the political field. Birmingham to the north, Southampton to

the south, Bristol to the west, and Norwich to the east, are to the best of my knowledge the nearest places to London at which daily papers are published, and all these places can only be reached per train from the metropolis at an hour when business has already commenced. If by any improvement in the rate of travel, or by any alteration in the hour of departure of the morning trains, these places could be reached at an earlier hour, I cannot doubt,—judging from all past experience,—that the London dailies would supply the newspaper demands of the towns above-named, as fully as they supply those of towns nearer to the capital. And I cannot question the probability, that in the not remote future all the provincial journals of England, which aim at anything beyond being purveyors of local news, will be supplanted by their metropolitan competitors.

My own belief is that this would have been already the case had it not been for the invention of the telegraph. By means of the magnetic wire the chief provincial daily papers are enabled to publish all the important events of the day, together with copious extracts from the original matter of the London press, at a much earlier hour than that at which the London papers themselves can be received in their localities; and therefore they command a very large sale within their districts. Still I do not think their political influence, even in the most favoured instances, is at all commensurate with their circulation. Residents in Liverpool take in the Albion, or the Post, or the Courier, according to their taste, as a matter of course; they read these papers for the telegrams and local intelligence, but they take their political views,—in as far as they take them from newspapers at all,—from the London journals, which they see later in the day at the Exchange or clubs, or read after dinner in their own homes. I must not be misunderstood, as denying any political influence to provincial journals. To cite only a few examples out of many, the Leeds Mercury, under Mr. Baines, the Scotsman, under Mr. Russell, the Belfast Whig, under Mr. Finlay, have exercised a most valuable and important political influence even beyond the area within which they circulate; but yet the above-named gentlemen themselves would hardly dispute my statement that their influence has been insignificant compared with that of London journals, conducted, it may be, with far less honesty and ability. In journalism, as in other matters, it is useless to struggle against manifest destiny; and just as now-a-days you cannot practically bring out a book, or produce a play, or gain a reputation as sculptor or painter, out of London, so you cannot publish a political newspaper of the highest class out of the sound of Bow bells. London has absorbed the press, as it has absorbed so many other things; and the little area included within Holborn, Bow Street, St. Paul's, and the Thames, is to all intents and purposes the only spot where you can wield the sceptre of journalism.

I have dwelt upon the monopoly of imperial journalism which circumstances have conferred upon the metropolis, because the fact explains much of the intellectual torpor which pervades the provincial press. Looking on the subject abstractedly, one might say that the topics which engage a local journalist's attention involve questions and problems of the highest interest ; and that the mere circumstance of his being virtually debarred from influencing the course of imperial politics need not limit in any way the activity of his mind. It may be so in theory ; it is not so in fact. Colonial statesmen possess a field of action freer and more susceptible of political tillage than can be found in the mother country, and yet their exclusion from the exercise of the highest imperial functions somehow dwarfs their minds to an extent which it is easier to perceive than to account for. And a provincial newspaper is, at the best, a colony of the parent press of London. Naturally enough, the talent and the energy of journalism are attracted to London. Every reporter of the smallest local paper looks forward more or less confidently to the hope of some day or other getting an engagement in the Gallery. Every lad who sees his paragraph in print for the first time cherishes an ambition of being a leader-writer on a London daily ; and every editor, however important his local position, entertains a conviction that his proper editorial sphere would have been the metropolis. I think, as a rule, it will be found that the men who have made a mark on the provincial press, and, having made their mark, do not transfer their energies to London, are proprietors as well as editors of newspapers. From my own experience I should say the majority of provincial editors were men who had tried their literary wings in the atmosphere of the capital, and having found that they could not rise to any eminence there, had subsided into local employments. And it is amongst this class that the originals may be found of whom Pott of Eatanswill is the exaggerated caricature. With the exception of a very few of the leading newspapers in the commercial towns, no local print can afford to pay a high salary for editorial services. The editor of a country Chronicle or Courier is either a local attorney who owns the paper in whole or in part, and works it with the view of pushing himself forward in his business, or else he is a man who has drifted into journalism or risen into it from the reporter class, and earns an income varying from two to four hundred a year. Now on such an income it is impossible for a man to associate with the landed gentry, or the commercial aristocracy, or even with the higher ranks of provincial professional men. I am afraid that education, pure and simple, is still not held in much esteem in English country towns ; and it must be owned that a provincial editor, as such, has no especial status attaching to his post. If he is also a proprietor and a man of fortune, his education aids him in securing a good social position. But I am afraid it does little for him if taken by itself. I have known an in-

stance in which a man of considerable culture was denied admission to the Book Club in a town where he resided as editor of a local paper, simply and solely on the ground that he was an editor; and I suspect the instance is by no means a solitary one. I have no doubt that most country dignitaries, if they have to write to the editor of their local paper, address him as Mr., not as Esquire. The subscription of a letter may seem a very trivial matter; but any one conversant with English country life knows how much is involved in the difference of designation. On the other hand, the editor is commonly superior in culture and refinement to the shop-keeping and farming class; and the very indefiniteness of his social standing tells unfavourably upon him. The uneasy vanity that is said to be characteristic of authors is I think to be witnessed in its highest development in provincial editors of a certain class. Being more or less hangers-on in the army of letters, they are constantly asserting their claim to be considered commissioned officers. In season and out of season they remind all who will listen to them that they belong to a profession which ought properly to rank higher than other pursuits; and for fear of being overlooked, they assume an importance which they themselves know to be unwarranted. In a continental sea-side watering-place there was, and may be still, a reading-room kept by an English lady, who, on the strength of her position, supposed herself to be connected with literature. It so happened that one of the great magnates of English letters,—Lord Macaulay, I think,—passed through the town, went to the reading-room, and wrote down his name in the subscription-book. His money was forthwith returned to him by the proprietress with the remark, "No, my lord; we literary people must not take money from each other." The story may serve as an illustration of the mania which prompts the rank and file of literature to assert their fellowship with the celebrities of the order,—a mania which rages amongst the inferior order of provincial journalists with especial intensity.

In these remarks I have no desire to wound the feelings of a very estimable body of men; I only wish to show how their position exposes them to certain failings, and how these failings, or rather foibles, are of a kind which afford easy scope for satire. The truth is, that quite apart from the social question, the position of a provincial editor is an exceptionally difficult one. There is nothing of the anonymous about provincial journalism. Articles, it is true, are not signed, but pretty nearly everybody who reads the paper knows that the editorial remarks are indited by Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones, as the case may be. In London very few people know, and still fewer care, who are the writers of the articles in any paper; and even if you are made the object of personal attack you hardly attach an individual character to the unknown entity by whom you are assailed.

In the provinces it is necessarily different. If you as editor say that the Tory administration is corrupt you are not asked out to Blue houses ; if you express a disbelief in the sincerity of the Opposition, your Yellow friends look coldly at you in the streets ; and if your duty compels you to make any unfavourable comment upon any local politician or dignitary, he regards the comment not as a public criticism, but as a personal offence. Moreover, it is a very different matter giving offence in town and in country. It must happen constantly to any London journalist to meet men in social intercourse, whose principles, or political conduct, he has condemned in print. Yet he has no feeling that they either know of his criticisms or would resent them if they did. In this great Babylon we give and take freely, and, whether we strike or are struck, we hardly know who has struck us, or whom we have struck in return. But in a provincial city, however large, the case is otherwise. The Gazette or the Chronicle is only a well-known alias for some individual with whom the readers of the newspaper are as intimately acquainted as they are with their own names.

Now it is not pleasant to attack any person with whom you are on terms of constant social intercourse ; and, on the other hand, if you do so attack him, the controversy at once assumes an embittered tone. Then, too, it should fairly be added, that to give offence to any important personage is a very serious matter for a provincial journalist. If, in the Times, or the Telegraph, or Pall Mall Gazette, there appears a furious attack, whether deserved or not, upon any individual, his wrath or annoyance cannot possibly produce any perceptible effect on the circulation or prosperity of the paper. It may safely be said that no man, or set of men, can do much either to benefit or injure the prospects of any influential London journal. But in the provinces an offended magnate of the county or the borough can do a good deal to injure a local paper which has excited his displeasure by its comments, or, at any rate, to annoy the conductor of the journal. Thus, judging from my own experience, I should say that the sin of provincial journalism lay rather in reticence than in over-plain speaking, in undue subserviency to the rule which bids us not speak evil of dignitaries, than in lawless disregard of the decencies of political controversy. All readers of Pickwick must remember the sensation leader in which the Eatanswill Independent attacked the domestic privacy of Mr. Pott. To quote the words of the article :—“Our obscure and filthy contemporary in some disgusting observations on the recent election for this borough, has presumed to violate the hallowed sanctity of private life, and to refer in a manner not to be misunderstood to the personal affairs of the candidate,—ay, and notwithstanding his base defeat, we will add our future member Mr. Fizwiz. What does our dastardly contemporary mean ? What would the ruffian say if we, setting at nought, like him,

the decencies of social intercourse, were to raise the curtain which happily conceals his private life from general execration." And so on. Of course this is a caricature, and is meant to be understood as a caricature of provincial journalism. All I can say is that in a tolerably wide acquaintance with country newspapers, I have never met with a paragraph which could be cited as appertaining to the class from which this exaggerated portrait was chosen. I have no doubt but in times when partizan politics ran higher than they do now-a-days, the caricature was nearer to the original. But as things are now, license of speech, bitterness of invective, recklessness of insinuation, are far more characteristic of metropolitan than of provincial journalism.

The plain fact is, that this decline in virulence of language is only one symptom out of the many which indicates the change passing over our provincial press. The tendency of the age is to make London more and more the metropolis of politics as well as of fashion and commercee. As a consequence of this tendency, local interests are becoming daily more important to our provincial papers, while imperial interests are daily diminishing in gravity. Within a circle whose centre is London, and whose radius is at least a hundred miles in length, you will not find a single country journal which bases its claim to literary existence on anything beyond its local intelligence; and every year the length of this radius is extended farther and farther. I do not mean to say that there is no provincial paper within the area I have described which has articles of general interest, and which treats of general politics with more or less ability. But I think the "general news" columns in local newspapers are rather accidents than essentials of existence. There are many country journals still in existence which not very many years ago supplied the public of their own districts with all the home or foreign political intelligence they cared to receive. Within the last half century London newspapers had but a small circulation out of the metropolitan district; and the quidnunes of towns, which now lie almost in the postal districts of the capital, looked to the weekly news-letter to tell them how the outer world was faring. From the traditions of former days many old-established local newspapers have preserved the custom of devoting a portion of their space to original articles and reports on general political topics, and they would probably find any sudden abandonment of the custom would be unpopular with country readers, —a class which, whether Tory or Whig in politics, is eminently conservative in the sense of disliking any sudden disturbance of its habits. Besides this, the natural predilections of local editors dispose them to cling fondly to their right of expressing a judgment on political questions. But notwithstanding these retarding causes, the force which tends to make our provincial newspapers more and more local is too powerful to be withstood. Every year the space

that can be allotted to other than local matter becomes smaller and smaller; and several of the most successful provincial papers, like the Stamford Mercury, or the Midland Counties Herald, have no leading articles at all, and hardly profess to give any general intelligence. In fact, the principle of the division of labour has been applied to the press; and from what I may describe as the imperial department of journalism, the provincial press is now practically excluded. It may be urged in opposition to my view, that the vast majority of our provincial prints are identified with one or other of our great political parties. The objection, however, is rather plausible than sound. In the country politics themselves have a local aspect, hardly intelligible to the dwellers in great cities. Great and important principles undoubtedly lie underneath the contest between Buff and Blue; but the contest itself is, so to speak, personified in the issue whether the Earl of A or the Marquis of B shall return the member for the county, or whether Alderman Brown shall hold the mayoralty in lieu of Councillor Black. In every locality where there is room for a prosperous paper, there is always a more or less successful competitor; and, as a matter of course, each journal bids for the support of one of the rival factions in the district. On this account, local questions, such as county or borough elections, have to be discussed in provincial prints, and their discussion involves the introduction of general polities. But even in this respect local journalism is losing its importance. An article on a borough election in any influential London paper has, as a rule, more effect in the borough itself than any number of home-spun leaders. This may be due partly to the fact that the editors of newspapers, like other prophets, have not so much honour in their own country as they find abroad; but it is mainly owing to the simple truth that even in the country, newspaper readers look to London as the one market for the supply of political ideas.

It would, however, be a complete misapprehension to conclude from these observations that in my judgment local newspapers are being gradually superseded by their metropolitan contemporaries. The truth is, their local importance has increased in exact proportion to the decrease in their imperial influence. I suspect that most persons are unaware how completely the local newspaper is a product of modern times. It has been my fortune to have the run of the files of an old county newspaper extending far back into the last century. At its commencement it obviously circulated by means of pedlars and packmen through a very considerable portion of the kingdom; and the one reason why it seems to have been published at the town whence it still is issued, was that this place happened to be a central position for the delivery of the paper over a very large district. Now, up to the close of the century, the paper to which I allude contains comparatively little local matter of any kind. Its pages

are filled with paragraphs of what we should now call general news. You will find therein much curious matter concerning the Continental wars of England, the Jacobite insurrections, the South Sea bubble, the movements of the Court, the proceedings of Parliament; but you will discover singularly little reference to the affairs of the county in which it appeared. In fact, making allowance for the comparatively undeveloped state of journalism, the news-letter of the last century was much more like the *Times* of to-day than the local journal into which it has gradually developed.

It would be a curious study, if my space would allow it, to trace the alterations which succeeding years have made in the price, size, and circulation, area, and contents of a representative provincial journal like the one I have in view. For the present I can only say that, while the price has decreased and the area of circulation has slowly contracted, the size of the paper and the numerical circulation have increased with still greater rapidity. And as a corollary of these two simultaneous changes, the local matter has constantly invaded further and further the domain of the general matter.

It is the fashion of essayists on the subject of journalism to dilate upon the fact that England is the only country which has produced a *Times* newspaper. I do not dispute the justice of the boast. Quite apart from any question as to the political merits or demerits of that journal, the daily production of such a mass of letter-press, foreign correspondence, law reports, original matter, and advertisements, is an extraordinary achievement of intellectual and mechanical ingenuity; and I, like all persons connected with journalism, am, perhaps, in a better position than outsiders for appreciating the true magnitude of the undertaking. But yet I cannot conceal from myself that other countries besides our own have had great political newspapers in many respects the equal, in others possibly the superior, of the *Times* and its chief London contemporaries. But, as far as I know, there is no country in the world except England, which has a provincial press that can even be compared with our own. In Germany, Italy, France, and America there is scarcely a town without its local print; but these foreign provincial papers are almost invariably broad sheets, intended to supply the district with general political news; they are not in the proper sense of the word local papers.

It would be worth the while of anybody who has never had his attention directed to the subject before, to take up a successful English provincial journal and examine for himself its table of contents. Dull as a country life may seem to the dwellers in great capitals, it is yet in itself a very active and busy one. Besides the regular Assizes, there are the Quarter Sessions and Petty Sessions. Besides this, there are constant meetings of borough and local magistrates, County Court and Bankruptcy Court sittings, Corporation Councils, Highway Boards, Vestries, and so on,—at one

and all of which proceedings take place, and speeches are delivered, which require to be fully reported. Then, too, there is a never-failing recurrence of benefit club gatherings, school treats, commemoration services in church and chapel, the narrative of which is expected to appear in the local papers. Every day of the week is appropriated to one or more important markets, the quotation of whose prices is a matter of imperative importance. The proceedings of local grandees and county magnates cannot be passed over unnoticed; and last, though not least, every town and village has its weekly chapter of incidents, too grave to be omitted from a local record. To the outer world, to whom Little Pedlington is a name only, it may seem a matter of absolute indifference to learn that there has been a fire on Farmer Brown's premises; that the wife of John Snooks, labourer, has had twins three times in succession; that the locality has just been visited by those well-known purveyors of provincial recreation,—the Sisters Sophia and Anne; or that the Rev. Mr. Wordy delivered an impressive discourse in aid of the building fund of Bethel Chapel. But for people who live in Pedlington such things possess a real interest, and any paper which seeks to represent Pedlington must give them their due recital.

In thus furnishing a weekly or daily narrative of everything great or small which takes place within its own area, the provincial press discharges a most useful and important duty. It may be said,—and I think not without truth,—that the provincial life of England is somewhat narrow in spirit, and that it might be better if our average country folk thought more of general interests than of purely local ones. But the very selfishness,—to use the word in no offensive sense,—of ordinary English provincialism renders it doubly important that the agency of publicity should be brought to bear upon it. Every now and then, as in the case of the Farnham Workhouse, the attention of the metropolitan press is called to some gross local abuse; and a few sensation leaders are indicted against it, with more or less,—generally the latter,—of permanent result. But, practically, the administration of local justice, of poor-law relief, of parochial tuition; in fact, the exercise of all the manifold functions of local self-government, are necessarily left uncriticised by the imperial newspapers of England. Yet the action of county magistrates, of boards of guardians, of town councils, of parochial vestries, affects the well-being, health, and happiness of vast portions of our fellow-countrymen; and this action would be almost unfettered if it were not for the supervision exercised by journals exclusively devoted to local topics. On the whole, I believe honestly, that the men who conduct our local administration desire to act fairly by their neighbours; but, notwithstanding this, the amount of injustice, oppression, jobbery, and even cruelty practised by local authorities, is not pleasant to think of, and that amount

would be a hundredfold greater if it were not for the knowledge that all their proceedings will be duly recorded and criticised in the local press.

This duty of acting as a local chronicle is, I conceive, the chief function of provincial journalism. A paper like the *Scotsman*, which has a wire of its own, connecting its office with the metropolis, and which receives independent telegrams from abroad, would doubtless object strongly to such a definition of its functions as the one I have just laid down. My answer is, that the *Scotsman*, and other papers of the same class, are hardly as yet to be described as provincial journals. Gradually, unless I am mistaken, they are becoming more provincial, and are therefore conforming more closely to the category of duties which I have assigned to the local press. It will be found, on examination, that the amount of space and attention these journals devote to the affairs of their own locality is already out of all proportion to that which London newspapers devote to the affairs of the metropolis. In so far they are provincial; but yet I should hardly describe them as provincial journals. Now it seems to me that, with very rare exceptions, the true local press of the United Kingdom does discharge the special function I have assigned to it honestly and well. To "chronicle small beer" is by no means an easy duty. The beer is often very small; and the temptation to make gallons out of gills is very great indeed. In justice to provincial journalists, it should be remembered that the *chronique locale*, as the French would say, is not conducted by the editor or even by the regular reporters of the journal. Every provincial paper has a staff of correspondents resident in the towns and villages through which the paper circulates. These contributors are naturally not persons of much education; their salary is extremely small, and, as a rule, their chief remuneration consists in the importance attaching to being the reporter of the local *Thunderer*. The correspondence which these contributors furnish is often very trying to editorial patience. The art of telling a fact simply is one which seems unknown amidst half-educated writers; and any event, however trivial, is described by them with all the glories of hyperbolical periphrasis. A statement that the school-children of a village had been entertained to tea at the Vicarage is always ushered in by an allusion to Sol having shone beneficially on the gay and festive scene, and finishes with a statement that the juveniles, having been regaled with a profusion of edibles and potables, displayed their gratitude towards their bounteous benefactors by singing the Hundredth Psalm with a fervour which spoke volumes for their lungs, as well as their religious training. So it is with almost all local correspondence. The adjectives outnumber the substantives in a terrible proportion; the sentences are long, and the sense contained in them inversely short.

The great advantage, in fact, possessed by metropolitan over pro-

vincial papers is in the sub-editing. Everybody connected with a London paper knows how to write a paragraph. But with the exception of the editor and the reporters there is generally nobody attached to a provincial paper who can write grammatically; and in many cases the reporters themselves require constant correction at the hands of the editor. It is not perhaps unjust that the newspaper should bear the responsibility of the blunders or bad taste of its subordinate employés. But yet any one acquainted with the practical working of a provincial journal will make great allowance for occasional lapses into the pseudo-Johnsonian style in which Pott of the Eatanswill Gazette described the festivities at Mrs. Leo Hunter's. Unless you know what a team a provincial editor has to drive you can hardly appreciate his skill in not running off the road frequently, or not getting often bespattered with mud. For obvious reasons very few persons read more than one provincial newspaper, and therefore the number of persons who are able to form any judgment of the general character of the country press is extremely limited. Judging from what I know of it, I should say it is singularly honest, very free from gross personalities, and conducted with considerable ability. This is the more remarkable because the editors are very much exposed to corrupt influences, and occupy positions which hold out little prospect of future advancement. I can only attribute this circumstance to the fact that the provincial editorial body is recruited from the lower classes of metropolitan journalism; and experience has convinced me, that in spite of certain obvious failings, the sub-editorial class in London includes amongst its numbers an unusually large proportion of high-minded and honest men. If the Eatanswill Gazette and Independent had been in any way true representatives of local newspapers, the provincial press would ere this have become an intolerable nuisance to the community. Hitherto, on the contrary, the institution of local journalism has been so uniform a benefit to the public that the magnitude of the benefit has hardly been appreciated at its full weight and value.

A BOAR-HUNT IN BURGUNDY.

In the autumn of 18—, whilst staying with a friend in Paris, I received an intimation from Savrelotte that the Comte du Veslay was about to hunt the wild-boar in the western forests of the Aube. My correspondent informed me the meet was urgent, as a troop of wild boars had crossed the plains from Central Burgundy, and were ravaging the standing crops. The news to me was quite unexpected, and I was unprepared with hunting accoutrements of any kind. The opportunity was one, nevertheless, which might not soon recur, and I therefore resolved, though at some cost of convenience, to accept the invitation which had been got for me from the Count himself; and I prepared accordingly to start for Troyes without delay.

At Troyes I found a friend waiting for me, with two gentlemen from Arras, to whom he introduced me as fellow-sportsmen. We thereupon commenced acquaintance by breakfasting together at the Hôtel des Trois Matous, and we then started for Clairvaux, all four together, in a double chaise de poste with three horses. At Clairvaux we were just in time to secure the only chambers left empty in the village inn. Other groups, arriving behind us, were compelled to bargain for shelter in private cottages. Our own chambers were such in name only, the two gentlemen from Arras having an attic harness-room, and my friend and self the corner of an old hay-loft, in which we managed to sleep soundly in spite of the mice.

The court-yard and offices were occupied with the Count's meute, which consisted of a hundred and eighteen dogs, including two couple of greyhounds, five limiers or bloodhounds, and three so-called boarhounds. These latter are extremely rare, and are said to possess particular acuteness in tracking boars. In form they resemble beagles, but are as large as mastiffs; their colour is black and tan, and they have ears of a prodigious length; they stand less high than bloodhounds, but have more capacious chests and stronger legs. This species is probably the séguisare mentioned in the old laws of the Burgundian Parliament as the ségutium, or boarhound, as distinguished from the voltrahum or greyhound, and the petrunculum or lurcher. The stench arising from this assemblage of dogs was atrocious, and we were glad to keep it from the house by closing the back windows. The landlady complained much of it, and considered that the Count, before taking her premises, ought to have warned her of the consequences of accommodating dogs. She told us, however, for our

consolation, that people soon got used to the inconvenience, and invited us to remark that the valets de meute and under-piqueurs were not only insensible to the odour, but took their meals in the very midst of it. She told us further, from her own knowledge, that the stench from dogs was not so bad as that arising from a basse cour de canards, or fattening park for ducks.

On entering the inn, the first object which met my sight was a huge wild boar which had been killed the previous day. I examined it with curiosity, and was unable, on feeling the solidity of its tusks, to forbear the reflection that the wild boar in close quarters must be a dangerous and worthy foe. By the side of the boar lay a marcassin, or wild sucking pig, which had been taken alive, and killed by the Count's orders. The marcassin is a pretty little animal, covered with close tawny hair, and marked with horizontal stripes, something after the manner of the Barbary squirrel.

The next morning, at daybreak, the hunters assembled at the sound of the horn, but on consultation, on the reports of the night-scouts, the Count decided the turn-out of the pack should not take place that day. An old solitary had been traced to a bauge, or lair, in a small section of the wood preserve, abutting on plains and meadows, and divided by the public road from the main forest of Modrelotte; and as the locality was near the village, and the battue not likely to be an operation of any length, the hunt was postponed till after breakfast. At one o'clock the huntsmen surrounded the preserve, armed with spears and carbines; the three bloodhounds were the only dogs employed, and these were put into the wood successively, at intervals of fifteen minutes. The Count, who had lent me a double carbine and a complete equipment, by way of further obliging me, had assigned me a post within the cover from which I could get a sight of the boar on his first emerging from the lair. All was now attention; each gunner shouldered his piece and held his breath, for the dogs had all three given tongue together, and no one could be sure at what point the game would break the cover; but after some hours of fruitless watching the hunt turned out an entire failure. The boar was gone, and the only game started was a wretched fox, which was fired at and missed by one of the piqueurs. The same piqueur shortly afterwards gave proof of more skill. On the road homewards a fine marten was observed to run up a tall tree, where it sat watching the huntsmen from the top branches, with only its head visible; the piqueur levelled his carbine, and, after steadily aiming at the animal for about thirty seconds, brought it down headlong with a bullet through its skull.

Next day, in lieu of hounds, the Count appointed to hunt with a pack of young thieves. At a distance of about a league and a half from Clairvaux is a Government reformatory for juvenile felons. These interesting youths are employed in husbandry and domestic farm service; they lead quiet lives, wear grey uniforms, and resemble

a flock of birds when seen at work on the hills from a long distance. By leave of the authorities, these boys are occasionally employed in hunting boars, not as pastime, but by way of aiding in a work of extreme public utility. Each boy is provided with a "crêke," a simple contrivance composed of two bits of wood tied together, one plain and the other notched, and which produce a sound, when rubbed together, resembling the word "krake." On arriving at the model farm which is attached to the reformatory, we found the whole gang drawn up to receive us in the court-yard. On our entering the gates, at a signal from the overseer, they set up a simultaneous shout in honour of Monsieur le Comte et ses dignes confrères, and then immediately commenced an air upon the crêkes, with which they tore our ears, until we all got safe into the farm kitchen.

Here the Count had prepared for us a substantial breakfast. Beef was the chief provision, but other meats were not wanting. Fried potatoes and haricot beans were piled in heaps upon hot iron trays, and cheese and jam were served in profusion to those who preferred breakfasting without meat. The wine was excellent, and the guests were urged to be convivial; but I observed that experienced huntsmen who, last evening, were willing enough to dine freely, were chary of indulging at breakfast, with the heat of the day before them. The Count, especially, took only a little cold beef with bread and water. One thing, to my taste, completely marred the entertainment; the doors and windows were open to their full width, and from the outside the little grey prisoners were able to observe us eating and drinking. This quite spoilt my appetite; I felt conscious of adding a pang to their punishment by each mouthful I swallowed, and I was infinitely relieved when the summons arrived to assemble for the final meet.

At eleven o'clock we started for Vire-aux-Tayaux, where we were joined by the sous-préfet of the department, and a number of the neighbouring proprietors. Most of these gentry wore blouses, over which they slung their guns and pouches, and it struck me they looked more sportsman-like in this becoming dress than the brethren from Paris, with their correct and costly equipments.

At twelve, all parties were assembled, and the Count, as master of the hunt, addressed the meet as follows:—"Gentlemen, we are met here to-day on a service of some danger, but at the same time, of great local importance. The fields of our neighbours are being ravaged by wild boars, and more than one farmer has lost through these animals his entire share of the autumn crops. Our business, then, is to destroy the wild boar, and also, as not less enemies of our friend the farmer, the fox and the wolf. Other game we hold sacred, the chasse being not yet opened, and our power to use fire-arms being in virtue of a delegation from the préfet for this special purpose. There may be some amongst you, gentlemen, to whom the exercise of boar-hunting may be new; to

such I recommend not only the use of all their presence of mind, but also much caution. Should any of you wound a wild boar without disabling it, the wisest measure would be to spring nimbly into the nearest tree. The boar turns invariably on its assailant, and I have known more than one incautious huntsman gored to death by a boar which he had supposed to be lying powerless. One word more, gentlemen, before dispersing. You will, I hope, be careful not to fire where you cannot be sure your ball has free passage beyond the object it may miss. Remember that a bullet carries death to a man more easily than to a boar. I am an old huntsman, and have seen a day's sport on two occasions brought to an end suddenly by the death of a companion, shot by an incautious neighbour. Gentlemen, I am delighted to meet you. May we be all in God's keeping, and may we reassemble in the evening, with trophies to attest our skill."

At the close of this harangue we proceeded in order to the cover. The little grey boys went in front, and the huntsmen followed, five abreast. The cover was a vast copse on sloping ground, intersected by a single path, and divided from the main forest by the bed of a torrent, impetuous in winter, but in summer completely dry. Here we were posted by the Count, and received our final instructions. The boys were then sent into the cover, and the hunt commenced. Presently the wood became alive with noise; the little urchins scoured the cover right and left, their sharp voices contrasting strangely with the dry odd sound of the crèkés. "Ohé là, le v'là, krake, krake." "Bouge donc, bouge donc, krake, krake." "O là là, krake, krake." "Holà, hist, ist, krake, krake." On all sides the rabbits and roebucks bolted from the cover, and at every moment I expected to hear the exciting cry, "à vous le sanglier;" but I was doomed again to be disappointed; after an hour and a half of tumult, the copse was declared to be beaten, and the game to have left the cover. Not a single boar had been seen, and the hunt was once more a failure. It was now three o'clock, and we had three hours disposable before dinner. One gentleman proposed that we should while away the interval with a game of leap-frog; but another suggested the bâton, which was adopted in preference by a large majority.

Before beginning, the Count addressed a few words of encouragement to the little grey boys. He then dismissed them with a smile of benevolence, after giving to each a small piece of silver, which he requested the overseer to get leave to lay out for their entertainment the following Sunday. No sooner, however, had the prisoners turned their backs, than the Count discovered he had missed his golden pencil-case. Thereupon, without a word of suspicion, he stepped forward and requested the gang to halt. "Young gentlemen," said he, "before you depart, we should like to see you go through your exercises. Now, draw up in a line, and eyes right."

"Are they to drill, sir?" inquired the overseer.

"Presently," replied the Count; "we want first to try a new movement. Now, young gentlemen, lift both arms together above your heads as high as you can ;—that's right ;—now then, clasp your hands tightly over your heads until I tell you to jump." The boys obeyed, and the Count then directing the company to observe that none of them changed position, exclaimed aloud, "Some one has robbed me of my pencil-case!" In an instant, one of the urchins unclasped his hands, and instinctively carried one of them to his jacket, and at the same moment the Count pounced on him, plunged his hand into his pocket, and pulled out the lost pencil-case. It turned out the youth was a Parisian pick-pocket, convicted of a second offence before his thirteenth year, and reconvicted at Troyes within six days of his last release. He had been since at the reformatory for several months, and was not yet fifteen.

This unpleasant scene over, the company turned their undivided attention to the bâton. This game, for the aimless dangers encountered in playing it, is worthy of the peasants of Brittany. It is nevertheless amusing enough to a certain class of spectators. Two stakes, of unequal length, are fixed upright in the ground, at a distance from one another of about twenty paces, and on the taller one is placed a hat in such a manner as to be easily lifted off by a stick thrust inside it. The performer then holds his nose with one hand, and placing the other on the top of the short stake, leans on it with his forehead, and in this embarrassed position walks round it three times, still keeping his nose pinched, and stooping his forehead to the stake. After the third round, he raises his head, pulls up the stake, and endeavours to walk to the hat, and thrust the stake inside it. But before taking two steps, he usually swerves aside, reels for an instant, and then rolls over insensible. Out of fifteen men who tried it, myself included, one only had strength to keep his head, and totter to the hat without a tumble. Nothing can be more silly than such a performance ; the act of lowering the head to the knees of itself creates a tendency to dizziness, and when to that is added the stoppage of the nose, and the giddy motion of going round, the effect is that the blood cannot recover its freedom without convulsing the senses.

On returning to the inn, I found a letter from Paris, limiting my stay at Clairvaux to one day more. I had, consequently, only a single chance left of encountering a wild boar. On learning this, the Count obligingly fixed for the next day the chasse en grand, which had been intended for the day following. He accordingly gave his orders for scouting the ground the same night, and he afterwards decided on joining the scouts himself. For this purpose, when the other guests were lighting their cigars, or sipping their gloria after dinner, the Count left the inn to pass the night in the forest, pour faire le bois ; and I was informed that he frequently indulges in this rude branch

of professional hunting. At three next morning, all was tumult and bustle in the court-yard, and two hours afterwards we sallied forth on horseback from the village, to the sound of the horn, to meet the Count and his companions at the rendezvous for breakfast. Behind us came a light spring-cart, containing the provisions and the Count's equipment. By seven, according to appointment, we reached the lisière du bois, where we observed a long stick planted in the ground with a strip of paper inserted in a slit at the top of it; this was a note from the Count, informing us that we were not to expect him till eight, and stating he had despatched an estafette to the village to postpone the departure of the dogs. Punctually at eight the Count arrived, drenched with dew, and his hair and face all bloody. He, however, quieted our fears before we had time to express them, by simply stating he had received a scratch in scouting a bramble cover, and he added the welcome news that there were three magnificent boars in the grande enceinte du Luz. Meanwhile the rangers backed the cart into the lisière, and spreading on the ground a clean sheet, produced, first, a mysterious black box with brass mountings, and afterwards a carpet-stool and two stone bottles.

The Count then begged we would excuse him whilst he performed his morning toilette, and pulling off his wet clothes, he forthwith enveloped his person in a white peignoir, sat himself down on a stool, and was shaved. He then gave orders for preparing breakfast, and two huge baskets were forthwith lifted from the cart and placed upon the ground. One of these contained bottles of generous wine and large jars of water, and the other, by far the larger of the two, was entirely filled with bread. The meat was packed apart in white napkins, and consisted exclusively of cold boiled beef and larded bullock's liver. There were also baskets of salad and hard-boiled eggs. The dogs and piqueurs now appeared in sight on the brow of the hill behind us, and a few minutes later the gathering was complete. The horses were then tied up to the trees and shrubs around the lisière, the hounds coupled together, and the huntsmen of every degree invited by the Count to help themselves without ceremony from the contents of the travelling larder. I never remember feeling more hungry than I did that morning, but though I ate long and with great diligence, my share of food amounted to a mere trifle when compared with the enormous ration allotted to himself by each one of the scouts and rangers. These hungry fellows helped themselves to the beef and liver by pounds at a time, and they appeared to me to bolt it like so many famished cormorants. They demolished bread in proportion, and kept themselves from choking by swallowing repeated draughts of wine and water. I must not forget to remark that, contrary to my expectation, I found the larded bullock's liver extremely good. Breakfast being disposed of, attention was turned with fresh interest to the exciting business of the day. The horses were unfastened and re-

girthed, the dogs brought up by the piqueurs, and the cart sent back empty to the village, the remains of the provisions being left to a dozen of idle paupers who had followed from the village on purpose.

The Count's instructions for the day were of a general nature, and very brief, and at half-past nine the whole assemblage put itself in movement, en route for the grande enceinte du Luz. At ten o'clock we reached the cover, which was a vast and stately wood, forming in reality a part of the main forest, but defined in the cadastral chart by imaginary lines as appertaining in right of manor to the barony of the Luz. The deep bay of the bloodhounds soon told us what we most desired to know,—namely, that the game had kept the cover; and shortly afterwards the enlivening cry of half the pack broke out in eager chorus at one and the same moment. I now felt sure my chance was coming, and I prepared to make the most of it. I nevertheless felt something over-anxious for a professed sportsman, and I was more than once on the very point of discharging my carbine at the head of a luckless hound.

Presently I heard a vague, distant rustling, followed by a quick snapping of branches, and at the same time a sound, which I recognised as the step so often described to me as the patatouf of the wild boar. Scarce an instant after, rapid as thought, a black mass bounded by with a graceful easy motion, resembling rather the dancing movement of a football than the tearing progress of a large animal in flight. This was the wild boar in person; but so different to what I had anticipated, so totally opposite to the huge, heavy, furious monster I expected to encounter, that I am compelled to confess to my shame, that I was lost in my surprise, and allowed the boar to pass without firing a shot. My next thought was to repair the loss I had occasioned by my unsportsmanlike absence of thought, and accordingly, at the top of my voice, I hallooed, “ à vous le sanglier ” to my neighbour on the right. But my notice was needless. My neighbour was a keener sportsman than I, and I learnt from the report of his piece that he had already seen and fired at the boar. Upon this I stepped quickly back into the road, where I was joined by several other huntsmen running in the same direction. Meanwhile other shots were fired in the wood, the dogs continued to give tongue, and we felt uncertain what was going on. Just at this moment a boar issued from the wood at full speed, crossed the road, and descending a slope on the opposite side, disappeared from view behind a projecting angle of rising ground. Instinctively we all began to move towards the spot, when an old piqueur, who had joined us in the interval, informed us hastily that the boar we had just seen was not the one the dogs were in scent of, and called us off to take post at another point. We followed the piqueur accordingly, and had scarcely proceeded fifty yards before another boar emerged from the very alley I had just quitted, crossed the road, and plunged into the woods on the opposite side, followed by a

number of the dogs. Immediately the old piqueur sounded his horn, and was answered by his fellows from other parts of the forest; gradually the dogs took up the scent from all quarters, and kept crossing the road in small parties, till at length the main body struck into the track together, and the hunt swept on in full cry. I now began to repent that I had chosen to hunt on foot, having dismounted and sent back my horse at the entrance of the cover. But the old piqueur reassured me ; "The horsemen," he said, "seldom see much more than their own horses, and I want your honour to be in at the hallali." He informed me further that the boar we were in chase of was the same my neighbour had fired at, that he had already killed a hound, and was wounded with a ball in the hind-quarters. We were now arrived at a point where the outline of the forest described a sudden curve, discovering on one side a naked plain, and on the other the junction of two tracts of copsewood, conducting each to independent sections of the main forest. Here the old piqueur stopped us. "Do you see," he said, "that point projecting beyond the copse to the right ? A league from thence, straight back through the cover, the Count has two outposts with a detachment of the dogs in leash. The Count himself by this time has crossed the line below the entrance of the cover, and if the boar follows his own track, as the scouts have reported it, he will be turned by the outposts, and have to cross the plain at this point to avoid the Count's party on his way back to the Luz. Should anything, on the other hand, occur to divert his course,—and the fall of a dry stick, or the croak of a jay is quite enough to do that,—we shall hear no more of him till we get back to supper, for no haste on our parts would now bring us up to the pack. We may therefore as well sit still and pick the autumn raspberries."

The piqueur's words came true to the letter. After an hour's suspense, beguiled sensibly by the wild raspberries, a horn sounded faintly in the distance, so faintly indeed that I should have taken it for the moaning of the wind, had not the old man sprung instantly to his feet, and called on us to stand ready. The horn sounded again, and this time nearer, and at the same moment we distinctly heard the cry of the pack. "The boar runs lame," said the old man ; "the dogs are too near him. Messieurs, c'est le moment; gare à vous; vous pourriez être décosus; la bête sera furieuse." There was no mistaking these words, nor any doubt that the event was fast approaching. The cry of the pack was incessant, and came close and thick, showing clearly that the dogs ran in a body and were following at sight. The branches now began to snap within hearing, and we could see the thicket wave and bend over the passage of the boar. Each moment I expected to hear the final crash as the animal burst into view and tore down everything before him. I was destined again to be disappointed, and was consequently once more taken by

surprise. There was no crash about it. Dense as it was, the boar came out of the thicket as smoothly as an eel, and it appears he merely snaps and strews the branches when, from their strength or position, they impede him in running straight. But once out of the cover, there was an end of all his smoothness ; a more rugged, gaunt, raging pig it would be difficult to imagine. At first I thought he had on a white collar, but this turned out to be lashing foam. On he came, rapidly enough, but not with the bounding step of the morning. His pace was now forced and heavy, and his gait limping. Two greyhounds ran with him, keeping up a continued snarling, but not attempting to seize him. On seeing the greyhounds, the old piqueur uttered an exclamation of impatience ; "Those nasty long dogs," he added, "spoil the hunting ; impossible to fire !" This was strictly true, the greyhounds ran on each side of the boar in such a way as to make it difficult to fire at our quarry without wounding one of the dogs. The boar was by this time half across the plain, and not a single other hound had yet emerged from the cover. "Feu donc, quand même," said the piqueur, "ce ne sont que des levriers après tout." With this sanction I felt no hesitation, and levelling my carbine I discharged it on the boar as he passed before me at a distance of about forty yards. My shot took effect, for the animal rose instantly on its hind legs, and swerving directly round, came straight upon us, followed by the two dogs. I had no second barrel this day, nor any leisure to reload, and of the three other men that were with us, only one had a gun, and he had fired without effect the moment the boar faced round in our direction.

The boar was now close on the piqueur, who stood waiting firm till the last moment. The old man then leapt nimbly aside, and almost touching the boar with the muzzle of his piece, deliberately pulled the trigger. Had the shot been fired, no doubt the boar would have fallen, but, most unhappily, the piece flashed fire, and the next moment I saw the poor old man on the ground, and we all rushed forward to assist him. The piqueur was wounded, but rose, nevertheless, and drew his knife for the attack, and at the same moment a greyhound seized the boar by one of its ears. The strife and uproar became now general, for the dogs came up by scores at a time, and the boar was quickly surrounded by the whole pack. The Count arrived on horseback immediately after, followed by the entire suite, some on foot, some running and leading their horses, others mounted and galloping. Nothing could now exceed the animation of the scene ; the boar was hidden from sight by the dogs, until, suddenly, he rose up from the midst of them, like a mountain rising from the sea. The dogs, however, soon closed on him again, and again he rose up from amongst them, shaking red foam from his jaws, and dealing wounds on all sides. At length the dogs kept him down, and in his last attempt to rise above them, we could just see his huge

form heave to the surface, and then sink down exhausted. Gradually his breathing became oppressed and thick, and from the short, quick bark which it resembled before, we heard it approaching, by degrees, to the gasp of suffocation. The Count, knife in hand, stood waiting for the expected signal, and, on judging the symptoms of strangling sufficiently intense, he stepped resolutely forward, made his way through the dogs, and, placing the point of the blade above the boar's shoulder, threw his weight forward, and buried the long knife to the handle in the creature's body. He then immediately gave orders to call off the dogs. On this, the huntsmen cracked their whips, and dealing furious lashes right and left, soon cleared the prostrate carcass. The dogs then formed, of their own accord, a close semicircle round the body at a respectful distance, and though they eyed the dead boar with the most impatient and eager looks, they never once attempted to break the line; such is their terror of the whip, and their state of habitual discipline. The grass around the boar was torn up, and the ground soaked with blood. A dog lay lifeless, with its body open and its bowels protruding. Three others, deemed hopelessly disabled, were shot by the Count's order, and the whole four were then buried on the spot. The boar was a full-grown, powerful animal, with sharp tusks and terrible fore-feet. The dog now killed, as well as the one killed in the forest in the morning, had been ripped by the creature's tusks. The others had been struck down and belaboured by its horny feet. The scene, as described, occupied scarcely five minutes from the arrival of the Count to the death of the boar. My first thought, after saluting the Count, was to inform him that the old piqueur was wounded, but before I had time to do so, a ranger came up to him, hat in hand, and requested him to come and examine old Procope, who was lying on the ground bleeding. The old man, on getting up after being struck down by the boar, had declared he was not injured, and seeing him on his legs and preparing to join in the scuffle, I had for the moment turned my attention from him to the exciting scene of the hallali. But it appeared he had fallen immediately afterwards, and had ever since lain unconscious on the ground. The Count appeared displeased that he had not been at once informed that a man was wounded. He, however, made no remark, but proceeded carefully to examine the patient. Two fearful wounds presented themselves,—one in the thigh two inches long, and another in the side, a little above the hip, which latter, though less long, appeared to me the more deep and dangerous of the two. The Count had always with him what was necessary for such an emergency, and after binding up the old man's wounds and reviving him with brandy and water, he propped him up with saddles until the arrival of the cart, which came from the village to bring home the boar.

Procope assured us he felt better, but he looked pale, and the Count was evidently anxious. On arriving at the village, we found a surgeon,

and from him we learnt that the Count's apprehensions were by no means groundless. The man's wounds were dangerous.

We were a large party at dinner, but in spite of the Count's attempts to keep us cheerful, we sat under a cloud of gloom. The entertainment was, nevertheless, enjoyable, and the episodes of the field for the last three days provided abundant matter for conversation. Wild boar was served in several ways. The marcassin came up roasted whole like an English sucking-pig, and was not unlike it in taste, although less succulent and somewhat higher in flavour. Cuttings of boar's flesh followed, both in steaks and cutlets, and these were in all respects excellent, as well as the roasted loin, which came up last. At dessert, according to the custom of the country on such occasions, the death of the wild boar was celebrated by various hunting songs in honour of St. Hubert. The company also drank the Count's health in the vin du pays, a villainous little yellow wine that flies directly to the head, and tastes of mouse. During coffee we were entertained with a serenade which the Count had given orders to the band of piqueurs to perform under the windows, by way of surprise, at a given signal. Accordingly, at half-past nine, in allusion to the grand event of the day, the horn sounded the hallali, which was followed by a series of airs in succession, from the court réveillée down to the *appel au lapin*;

“Tu as des puces, tu as des puces,
Dans ton habit gris.”

The Count's musicians were skilful, and the serenade was appropriate to the occasion. I was, nevertheless, extremely pleased when it was over, for the open windows, which let in the music, admitted also the odour from the dogs. Our previous parties had been kept up till after midnight, but on this occasion we were in no mood for dissipation, and we all retired before eleven. The last report of old Procope was, that the doctor apprehended fever, and I learnt further from the landlady that another medical man had been sent for from Stour, the nearest village on the road to Troyes.

I passed a sleepless night. I could not help accusing myself of some inhumanity in not having ascertained for myself, notwithstanding the old man's unselfish assertion, what had really been his condition. Once I thought of dressing and of crossing the road to tender my assistance at the house where the old man lay, but I reflected that the Count was with him, and possibly two doctors, and I was comparatively a stranger amongst many persons who had already offered their services. I feared, therefore, that I should be less an aid than an embarrassment, and I endeavoured to compose myself to sleep. Towards morning I rose and went to the window,—for I had now a room in the front of the inn. The first thing that met my sight had indeed a sorrowful significance. A priest was leaving the house,

with his book under his arm, and in his hand a small black case. I dressed hastily and ran down-stairs, where I found the priest in conversation with the landlord of the inn. My worst fears were realised. The priest had been sent for professionally, and he had only arrived in time to see the old man die. His interment took place the second day after his death, and as my summons to Paris had been countermanded by a letter received the day following, I was enabled to show my regard for the Count by following the funeral convoi of one of his oldest and most respected servants.

A meet had been appointed for the next day at St. Bernard's Cross, the site of an old monastery which has been now in ruins for more than a century; but the melancholy incident of poor Procope's death had naturally disturbed the order of the Count's arrangements, and a notice had been sent to the proprietors of the neighbourhood, postponing the appointment to that day week; and as that date exceeded the limit of my extended liberty, I announced my intention of leaving Clairvaux the evening of the day following. Next morning I was agreeably surprised to find a straw package, made up and labelled with my address, containing one of the hind-quarters of the boar I had assisted in killing; and on my thanking the Count for this kindly present, he politely assured me it was my acquired right. He added that the joint had been plunged expressly into boiling water, and would now keep fresh for a week. At breakfast wild boar again made its appearance, but this time it took the savoury form of a dish of tripe, and though I am not an admirer of such dainties in general, I was forced to admit that those of the wild boar were savoury eating. I think, nevertheless, I should have liked them better without the sauce of burnt rum.

In the course of the afternoon the Count invited us to assist at the curée which was about to take place in a large open meadow adjoining the public way, and through which ran a stream of water, diverted from the river for the convenience of the village. In this part of the country the word "curée" applies not only to the carcass of a wild animal, killed in the chase and abandoned to the dogs at the moment of the death, but also to flesh of any kind given up to be torn and fought for by the whole pack assembled; and in the present instance it applied to a dead horse provided at the Count's expense. This was the second horse slaughtered for the dogs since my visit to Clairvaux, and as the first of the two afforded a more characteristic specimen of kennel casualties, I select him as the hero of my description. He was a poor, old, done-up grey, led limping into the meadow without a halter, the équarrisseur simply hauling him along by his ragged, mangy forelock. The rule is to stun the animal first with the poll-axe, and then, at leisure, to deprive him of life by bleeding; but on this occasion, with such a spent, inanimate subject, the équarrisseur seemed to think the poll-axe superfluous, and contented himself with

merely opening a vein in the horse's neck. He had soon reason to repent his departure from the established practice. It is the nature of the horse never to flinch from the knife. On being stabbed in a vital part, he generally remains immovable until he sinks on the spot from exhaustion and loss of blood. The use of the poll-axe is therefore a mere matter of humanity, and, had it been resorted to in the present instance, the slaughterer would have been spared a deal of bootless trouble. The poor horse was already so feeble when brought on the field, that at the first sense of augmented weakness from the bleeding he reeled from his position, and staggering down the slope towards the stream, rolled over to the brink, and at last fell right into the water. Here the équarrisseur spent himself in vain efforts to dislodge him, and was at length compelled to come on to the inn to implore assistance from one or more of the Count's unoccupied staff. The Count, however, on hearing the story, refused to allow his men to interfere, observing that the équarrisseur ought to have used the poll-axe, in order to have put the horse out of pain at once, and as he had thought fit to spare himself that trouble, he must take the consequences. The man was therefore obliged, in order to be ready for the appointment at three o'clock, to procure two bullocks at his own expense to draw the carcass from the water. Then the operation of flaying went on briskly. On detaching the skin, the man rolled it up carefully, and bound it with a strong cord; he then separated the intestines, and also the lower joints of the legs, and put them into the water to soak. The hide, he informed me, with the bones and hoofs, were his natural perquisites, and in them consisted the most profitable part of the transaction. The next process was to cut off the thighs and shoulder joints. These were set apart to make soup for another day,—dog-soup, I mean, of course,—leaving the bare carcass for the entertainment of the hounds. During the progress of the work, two sheep-dogs approached timidly, and were allowed by the man to feed from the carcass to their hearts' content. It was the Count's order that such dogs as chose to present themselves in good time before the curée, should be received hospitably; and it usually happened that one or two got scent of the feast and arrived at the right moment. Punctually at three o'clock the horn sounded “à la curée,” and the whole pack issued from the court-yard, preceded by a belted piqueur in full dress, and followed by two valets in light-blue velveteens. In this order they crossed the road, and proceeded half way down the meadow, where the Count and ourselves were waiting to receive them. Here the dogs were drawn up into a wide semi-circle, waiting the word of command to rush forward and begin the carnage. The Count stood by, watch in hand, to time the pause, which, for the sake of discipline, was prolonged to three minutes. The carcass lay within sight, at about a hundred paces off; and during the suspense of the three minutes, the business of the dogs was not

only not to break the line, but also to keep perfect silence. But this was more than canine nature was capable of, except amongst the veteran hounds. Every now and then a half-uttered, impatient bark broke from some inexperienced whelp, and was, as often, visited by a severe lash from the heavy whips of the conductors. And such was the skill of these men in handling their instruments of discipline that, though the dogs were packed together as closely as possible, the lash descended invariably on the right individual, and on him alone. At length the wished-for moment arrived. "Une ! deux ! trois ! et partez !" shouted the head piqueur; and away swept the whole swarm of sanguinary banqueters, each one to tear and gorge in his own behalf, and eager to forestall his neighbours in the reeking feast.

The horn now sounded the retreat, and the hounds were again drawn up in a long semi-circular line. They presented certainly a hideous spectacle ; their heads and chests were smeared with blood, and some amongst them who had actually got into the carcass and been drawn about inside it, looked precisely as if they had been "dipped in spumy gore," and in this state they would remain until next morning at daybreak, when they would be taken by the valets to wash in the river. The hounds were now marched back to the kennel in the same order in which they had quitted it. The Count paid the équarrisseur for his services, and several persons from the village were already in attendance to bargain for the bones and garbage. This latter part of the business was, I presume, soon settled, for one of the standers-by took to chopping the skeleton to pieces, with a hatchet borrowed from the inn, and a cart arrived soon after to convey the spoils away.

I have nothing new to report of the natural history of the wild boar. Such particulars as I learnt during my stay at Clairvaux are simply corroborative of what is stated by authors on the subject. I have no doubt it is true that the wild boar will feed on flesh if pressed by hunger or bred under circumstances of carnivorous temptation, but I doubt that opportunities have occurred for testing in this particular the appetites of the boars of Europe. We know, on the contrary, that whilst wolves have issued from the forest to feed on human corpses fallen in battle, boars inhabiting the same woods, though passing close to the scene of action, have not turned aside to touch the bodies. And I can adduce an instance, of my own personal knowledge, where a wild boar, domesticated on a farm belonging to the mayor of Clamecy-les-carpillons, evinced no symptoms of the omnivorous propensities of the common hog.

I have nevertheless, on the Count's authority, recorded as proper to the boar, a trait of character which ought to redeem his name for ever from the odious service of typifying brutal spleen. The coup de boutoir, as you know, when taken in its literal sense, means a blow unceremoniously inflicted by the snout of the boar. Figuratively,

it applies to any injury, moral or physical, unnecessarily inflicted through sulky, hoorish ill-humour, and as the term boutoir is used to designate exclusively the snout of the wild boar, it follows that this animal by common consent, is the elected emblem of all that is brutal, surly, and ungentle. The Count's story related to a wild sow, hunted by himself in one of his early campaigns, and was introduced by him in the course of a discussion on the subject of the coup de boutoir for the express purpose of controlling our opinions before we should conclude irrevocably that boars were constitutionally incapable of generous impulses. "On that occasion," said the Count, "I was not out hunting regularly; I was merely out with my carbine reconnoitering a cover in which boars were reported to have taken shelter. Towards noon, to my surprise, five boars got up, out of range, and crossed into marsh lands beyond the Aube. I stood watching their movements till the mist concealed them, and was preparing to quit the cover, when a half-grown sow rose close behind me and took the plain towards the marsh in the direction followed by the boars. I fired instantly and down she fell. I then drew my knife and approached with caution. On arriving within a few paces of the spot I perceived she was wounded in the side, and lay on her knees with her head bent forward on the ground. Before, however, I had time to plunge the knife into her back, she rose unexpectedly and made off with a staggering pace, but only to fall prostrate a gunshot farther on. I now considered there was no danger, and going up to the animal, I prepared with confidence to end the adventure. It was here I learnt that lesson of which I have since realised the importance on many an occasion, namely, to distrust the appearances of exhaustion in powerful and dangerous animals. On bending over this apparently dead sow, to ascertain the precise whereabouts of her mortal wound, she started up suddenly, and dealing me with her head a blow on the mouth which sent me reeling, she bolted off full gallop and left me unconscious on the ground. On recovering the shock, which was a most severe one, I perceived the sow had again relaxed in her pace, and I rushed after her breathing rage and vengeance. Fortunately, a team of bullocks had passed in the interval, and diverted her from the marshes,—where I should assuredly have lost her,—and at the same time a shepherd and his dog had intercepted her return to the cover. She had consequently struck directly into the high road, which was indeed her only alternative, unless she had faced round in defiance of my drawn and shining knife. I had no time to re-load, for though the sow ran limping, her pace was rapid enough to try my utmost wind, and I was compelled at last to drop my piece in order to run more lightly. After some twenty minutes of this exercise, a party of field labourers approached in the opposite direction, and the sow turned off immediately into the open fallows. Here my strength began to fail, but I

still held on, encouraged by the sight on one side of some horses feeding, and, on the other, of a straw cottage. These objects seemed to prevent the sow from diverging, and I was able to keep her in view for a long distance ahead. She had now decidedly the best of it, I being reduced to a walking pace and she being out of sight. Presently, however, I saw her running back towards me, having been turned, I presume, by some object which I was too distant to perceive. I thought it was her intention to attack me, instead of which she turned off obliquely and followed an open cart-way leading to the entrance of a large farm. Here she began to run more faintly and I gained upon her sensibly. She then stopped for an instant, but seemed immediately to recover her strength and proceeded to limp on with fresh courage. Another moment brought her to the farm-yard, into which she ran without hesitation and I followed close behind her. A pathway through the farm led to low ground visible from the entrance. Into this pathway the sow struck forthwith, and you will imagine my horror on perceiving right before her on the ground an infant of tender years sitting, heedless of all peril, alone at play. The sow ran straight at the child, and I closed my eyes in pain as already in fancy I saw it dashed into the air, or killed and mangled on the spot. Not so, gentlemen. She took it up most gently, and softly placing it on one side, continued her hopeless flight. But I was now close on her, and having become desperate with heat and fever, I sprang on her downwards, risking all, and thrust the knife into her heart."

"Ah, la pauvre bête! mais je lui aurais fait grâce," said Henri Jesson, one of the guests, who felt compassion for the poor sow, so tender for a helpless being, even in the trying moment of her own extremity.

"Et moi, Messieurs," replied the Count, "qui avais perdu deux dents!" And with this the Count raised his upper lip, and exhibited the vacant space once occupied by two front teeth, knocked out in his collision with the gentle sow.

CHRISTIAN THOUGHT EMBODIED IN CHRISTIAN ART.

WE of the present day are living in the midst of a society, all whose laws, habits, and thoughts are, to a large degree, based on the model of a far different period. It is very difficult for us to realise how much we owe, both of good and evil, to the long predominance of ecclesiastical influence throughout Europe. We do not see how inevitably our views concerning our faith are modified by the artificial perspective in which we have been, by the very circumstances of our birth, compelled to contemplate them. Our church histories are to a very large degree, perhaps unconsciously, written under this influence. What can be more diverse than the treatment of the same facts by Lingard, by Mosheim, and by Priestley? Our latest and most advanced works on theology are but the last ripples of that great stream of Christian speculation which, commencing with the early fathers, has flowed down through the scholastics of the middle ages and the divines of the post-reformation period to our own times. Fixed and sharply-defined modes of thought, originating in the great councils of the Church, have been gradually forced upon the whole of the Christian world, and the uniformity which thus prevails is almost necessarily attributed to the apostolic era. -The Church of Rome gathered all the spiritual rays of ancient Christianity into one focus, whence, as from a fresh point, they diverged over the whole of Western Europe. Was the glass through which they passed perfectly achromatic? We, living in the very midst of this halo of light, can indistinctly perceive the point whence the rays diverge, but we find it difficult to realise to ourselves what was their condition previous to their convergence. We are thus very naturally led to antedate the period of their divergence, and, in accordance with the authority of all the Catholic apostolic teachers, to place that in the first century which really belongs to the fourth or the fifth. Thus the written history of the Church is, like all other histories, very liable to be tinged by the hues of the writers' own opinions.

There exists, however, a vast collection of unwritten history of the Church which may surely be brought forward in illustration or modification of many prevailing theories. If we free ourselves as far as possible from all preconceived opinions, and leave on one side all that has been written on the subject, it seems possible that, by a sort of ecclesiastical geology, we might penetrate through the religious crusts

of the Church, and arrive at the underlying rock. If we do this, we shall successively pass through the alluvium of dissent, the old sea-shores of the Church of England into which have drifted so many fossil specimens not properly belonging to it, through the volcanic period of the Reformation and the glacial epoch of the Church of the middle ages, down to that primitive granite on which the whole has been gradually deposited. In the course of our brief explanation it will not be possible to assign the remote causes of various phenomena that we may meet with, nor to say why at one period there was a gradual upheaval, or at another such a subsidence that the great sea of ignorance once more flowed over the whole of the spiritual world. Though we cannot scientifically point out what was the unseen power which caused the lava stream of the reformers to burst through the rock of the Church and give an entirely new aspect to the religious landscape, we may yet be able to trace a certain continuity of development, and to suggest that the theory of natural selection, and the adaptation of certain lines of thought to the necessities of particular ages and particular peoples, may in no small degree account for some of the ultimate results.

The fossil specimens which we may hope to find in our ecclesiastico-geological survey may be briefly described as,—monuments, tombs, paintings, frescoes, mosaics, medals, coins, sepulchral lamps, and other things of a like nature in which the antiquarian heart delights.

Through the alluvium of Protestant dissent we must pass rapidly. It is too recent to present any fossil remains, and its organisation and structure, though important and interesting in the actual state of society, have as yet contributed nothing original or distinctive to the museum of Christian art. What little art may have been developed among the dissenting churches is merely reproductive, having slight or no relation to their religious tenets, and being not unfrequently highly incongruous.

Our first and most striking example is in the painted windows of our cathedrals and some of our older churches, though, alas! too few of these are left in their original condition for us to form an adequate idea of what was the intention and effect when painted windows were not so much mere ornaments, but were veritable methods of instruction. They were the pictures illustrating the great book of the Church, and, as narrated in Goethe's pretty story of St. Joseph the second, the light that passed through them illuminated many a mind that must otherwise have remained in darkness. Entering even now into those sacred aisles, where no light shines that is not tinged with some holy thought,—as, for instance, in the great Dome of Cologne,—we can partially understand what must have been the effect on the popular mind in those remote days, when all learning was confined to the clergy, and when even the simple arts of reading and writing were looked upon as something so mysterious and wonderful as to endow

their possessor with special privileges. We can fancy the yet half-barbarous peasantry flocking in from their remote homes, their memories still full of pagan legends, and their faith sadly overclouded by those vague fears which ignorance so readily evokes, their conception of the spiritual world being something akin to that of an intelligent child of the present day who has been gloating over the collections of Dasent and Grimm, and Thorpe's northern mythology. They enter, then, within the sacred precincts, and find themselves in an entirely new world. There in the great east window hangs the Son of God upon the Cross,—there the crown of thorns, the nails, and the dropping blood, through which human salvation was wrought,—there, too, the careless Roman guard, and there the scoffing Jews.—there, also, at His feet was the Virgin Mother, happiest and gentlest among women, whose more merciful spirit might be approached by those whose fears deterred them from offering their petitions at the altar of Christ. Passing round the lofty aisles, the visitors would see in succession the Evangelists and the Apostles, and then the various scenes of our Lord's life and ministry; especially would they find fully delineated the life and the miraculous works of that saint to whom the church was specially dedicated. To the worshippers of those days the Church was full of mystic lore; it was the ever-open book in times when the Bible was sealed. And its value as an educational instrument can be measured only by the genius, the labour, and the wealth which was spent on it. A pious man who would now publish a cheap edition of some good book, or contribute to the establishment of a village school, would then just as naturally have given a painted window to his parish church, that he might help to complete some series of Scripture histories, or have paid for the execution of an inferno on the walls, whose horrors should frighten the evil-disposed into good behaviour,—such a picture as not very long since we saw preserved in one of the arches over the chancel of Gloucester Cathedral.

If, as we have thus supposed them to be, the painted windows and mural pictures were originally designed for the purposes of instruction, it is not surprising that among those peoples who have been only imperfectly brought under the influence of Roman civilization, they should be found to take a very literal and prosaic view of both scripture narratives and the early legends of the Church, and to be of a very different character to those which are to be found in Italy. They were not intended to give wings to a faith already aspiring to the skies; but to supplant German *märchen* and English fairy stories by the first elements of Christian history. As other methods of instruction have become more attainable, they have gradually dropped their purely instructive character, and assumed that of decorative art, till, at last, they are reduced almost to the level of ecclesiastical upholstery, whose chief beauty it is to look like something old, and with slavish fidelity to imitate the quaint and grotesque fancies of simpler times. The

influence of national tastes and habits is most strikingly apparent in the artist's conception of what the historic religious picture ought to be. The Dutchman, phlegmatic as his own canals, depicts the flight into Egypt under the disguise of a fat boor calling, with his wrow and kind, at a wayside inn, with, for accessories, a number of peasants playing cards. As another example of this style of art, we may take Van Leyden's picture of the head of John the Baptist, in which the extreme Dutchness of the scene is enhanced by the oriental turban of the king being brought into close contiguity with the Marie Stuart-like bonnet of Herodias ; whilst a closely-shaven French poodle growls at a cup-beaver in slashed hose, who is pouring wine out from a china jng that would be a gem in a collection of those brittle treasures. These are but specimens of that realistic school of painting, which, however valuable as illustrative of the gradual progress of art, are not of great interest for our present purpose. They contribute but little to our knowledge of the more ancient periods of Christian history, for the thought and ideal which they contain are pre-eminently those of their own day presented under scriptural forms. Such pictures as these illustrate not the progress, but the fidelity of Christian thought. It is true, however, that in those paintings which proceed from the Italian schools, we find a more worthy method of treatment, and a more persistent attempt to illustrate their subjects with something approaching to historical accuracy ; not, indeed, in actual detail, as with the pre-Raphaelites of the present day, but as to general effects. Next to this historical class of pictures are those that may be characterised as the theological ;—as the Holy Trinity ; the word proceeding out of the mouth of the Almighty to perform its creative office ; the blood flowing from the side of the Lamb which was to wash away the sins of the world. Another very favourite series, is that of the last judgment,—of the devil and his angels, and the sufferings of the wicked in hell-fire,—produced, doubtless, by the immense popularity of Dante's "Divina Commedia," which appears to have had a similar influence in popularising Roman Catholic conceptions on these subjects to that which Milton, in his "Paradise Lost," exercised on the theology of the Reformation.

Keeping in view the productions of the various schools since the revival of painting in Italy, we cannot but come to the conclusion that they represent an intensely theological phase of religious thought. There is rarely, if ever, an attempt at symbolism of any kind,—still more rarely an endeavour to inculcate moral or spiritual truths by material emblems. Everything is anthropomorphic in the extreme ; and one cannot help believing that both priest and people thought of the Deity as actually existing under the form of a supremely great and glorious manhood, as in Raphael's "Creation of Light;" of Christ as the Divine Man, man indeed in body, but glorified by all the attributes of the Deity, as in Leonardo da Vinci's painting, known as "On these

two hang all the law and the prophets," or bowed down by the sins of the world, as in that terrible betrayal scene by Gherardo Delle Notte.

The spiritual position of the Church in those days strikes us as something more terrible than we can now easily realise to ourselves. Our first parents sinned against God, and the black cloud of the Almighty's wrath hung over a doomed world, out of which none could pass, except to eternal torment, unless aided by the good offices of the Church. For the faithful only did Christ die upon the cross, and through St. Peter and his successors alone might his atoning blood be sprinkled on the wretched sinner. Within sound of the golden harps of heaven, the jaws of hell were ever open wide, and the devils were rejoicing over the multitudes whom they pitched headlong to everlasting fire with their three-pronged forks.

Nothing but an ignorance and fanaticism, which rendered men totally insensible, or at least altogether unable adequately to realise the meaning of what they believed, could have made life supportable under such a system. Like children, they first allowed their imagination to sup full of horrors, and then brought forth the good fairy who was to make all things right for those who were her favourites. Like children, also, they never realised the anarchy, confusion, and injustice of a universe governed according to the petty jealousies or friendships of the most ignorant of human beings.

Through all these ages there doubtless ran a vein of mystic thought which penetrated the symbol, and laid hold of some eternal reality. But the thinkers of this school have left little or no organic traces of their existence. They have either made no fossils, or they are lost in the multitude of more common species. The rough stem and the hard nut endure for ever, but the fairest flowers of the spiritual world can never be found in the fossilised state, and it is pleasant to think that they should thus perish, because they are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and we have only to look around to behold them.

Overlapping this age, but running also far back into the early centuries of our era, are the illuminations of the Holy Scriptures, and of the writings of the fathers. These, though extending over a long period, do not represent any very important phase of religious art. They have all the realistic characteristics of the larger paintings, with much of their grace of form and beauty of execution. But I am not now attempting to point the artistic beauties of any age or school, I wish only to indicate the subjects of thought present in the minds of the artists, and of those for whom they wrought. Yet, in passing, we can hardly help noticing the great tenderness of expression in the faces of the saints, and the glorious beauty of the sybils. Nor ought we to leave unmentioned the uniformity to two or three types of the heads of Christ. It is sufficient to say of these illustrations, that the further back they go the more classic they become; the drawing and grouping still retain something of the old Greek

felicity of outline, and the subjects are treated in a more simple and pleasing manner, as in the illustrations to the Greek MS. of Genesis in the Imperial Library of Vienna, supposed to be of the fourth or fifth century.

From these we may pass to the mosaics of the eastern and western Basilica. There are many of them of extreme beauty, though executed at a period when the pictorial arts were at a very low ebb. An example of this is the head of Christ—1296—in the Church of San Miniato, at Florence, which is almost perfect in its typical beauty, and is deservedly regarded as the first instance of the revival of art.

From this time, as we go backwards, we find more and more traces of the Byzantine school of art, and we see clear evidence in the nature of the subjects chosen of a milder form of theology, a less intense appreciation of the terrible, and a greater readiness to dwell upon the historical and poetical aspects of the Scriptures. These Christian mosaics go back to the earliest date, and overlap the last productions of the heathen artists. Indeed, there is one head of Christ in mosaic, which, if rightly attributed to the first century, represents the earliest likeness of the Saviour with which we are acquainted, and must be regarded as the origin of the most beautiful and persistent of all the types.

I am compelled to pass by the ivory diptychs, many of which are of high antiquity and great beauty, and other smaller works of art of a very early period, but this is of less moment as they do not materially differ in choice of subjects or design from those already mentioned.

From the mosaics of the third and fourth centuries, we pass, not figuratively, but actually, into the bowels of the earth, and find ourselves in what were once the Arenaria, and are now the catacombs of Rome. I need not describe them, as most persons are now familiar with the general appearance of those strange labyrinths of tombs, and altars, and chapels, but proceed at once to notice their contents. The usual theory is that the Christians were driven by persecution to worship God in these subterranean chambers. Without denying that they did so worship in times of persecution, of which there is abundant evidence, I cannot help thinking that inclination, no less than necessity, led them to this practice. The elaborate chapels and ante-chapels for both men and women, the mural paintings, baptistries, and altar tombs, all lead to the conclusion that the worship here celebrated was not merely hurried and informal, as we should suppose under persecution, but was carried on with all the pomps and formalities of the early Roman Church. The one great difficulty of this period is the absence of dates to nearly all the monuments, whether pictorial or otherwise. The inscriptions, both of the simpler and more elaborate forms, are extremely exact as to the age of the person interred, mentioning the years, months, and days, and sometimes even the hours that he lived, but rarely giving the name of the

Consuls or the Emperor for the time being. There are, however, a few clearly ascertained dates, which are sufficient to prove that it was chiefly from the year 300 to 500 that the catacombs were the scene of Christian interment and worship. Among the later and more important of the works of art found in these catacombs are the sarcophagi discovered in the chapels of some of the wealthy Roman Christians.

Let us take as an example that of Junius Bassus, of the Anicia family, found in the catacombs of the Vatican, on which, fortunately, remains the inscription, ending as follows:—IIT. AD. DEV.M. VIII. KALL. SEPT. EVSEBIO. ET. YPATIO. COSS., which fixes the date accurately in the year A.D. 359. He died in his forty-second year and third month, and is called NEOFITVS, the new born. The general form and shape of the sarcophagus are evidently derived from classic times, and on the two shorter sides the ornamentation of Cupids gathering grapes and pressing out the wine is very beautiful, but so closely copied from heathen art, that it is difficult to attach any Christian meaning to it. The two longer sides are equally beautiful, and thoroughly Christian. Each side is divided by pillars into five compartments. In the centre compartment of each is a scene from the life of Christ, the first being his entrance into Jerusalem, with Zacheus looking down upon him from the tree. The second scene represents Christ sitting on a throne, with, probably, St. Peter and St. Paul on either side of him. The throne itself is placed on a kind of arch, probably the rainbow, under which are seen the head and shoulders of a figure supposed to represent Tellus, or the earth. I imagine these two subjects are intended to contrast the humility of Christ's entry into the earthly Jerusalem with his glory in the heavenly city.

The other scenes pourtrayed are,—Abraham about to sacrifice Isaac, and the appearance of the ram; Job sitting on a heap of ashes amid his comforters; Adam and Eve and the tempter; and Daniel in the lion's den, from the Old Testament: and from the New Testament, Peter denying Christ; Christ led to judgment, with Pilate washing his hands of the blood of that just man; and the last, probably Peter, led in chains to prison.

Another exceedingly beautiful sarcophagus is that of Frobis and Proba, of which I have not been able to discover the date, but which evidently belongs to nearly the same period as that just described. One side of this also is divided into five compartments. In the centre stands our Saviour on a mound, from which flow the four rivers of Paradise, symbolising, not improbably, the four Gospels. He is represented as a young man, beardless, and with curling hair, and bearing a highly ornamented cross in his right hand. On either side stand St. Peter and St. Paul. The other compartments are occupied by images of the twelve apostles, and of early saints. Under the central arch of the opposite side are the figures of the husband

and wife, hand in hand, as in the act of parting at the gates of Death.

On another sarcophagus, the side of which is divided into seven portions by palm-trees, we find five of the Christian miracles, Christ himself standing in the centre between the law and the Gospels; and in the seventh compartment a figure offering small cakes over an altar fire to a large snake, which is twisted round one of the palms. This is evidently a sacrifice to *Aesculapius*, and is probably introduced as a heathen symbol of Christ in the character of the "Healer."

On another sarcophagus we have Moses striking the rock; Moses receiving the law from the hand of the Almighty; Christ and Peter and the cock; and Christ at Cana, and the miracle of the wine. It is impossible to enumerate all the subjects which are found thus represented. Those I have already mentioned, together with the three children before Nebuchadnezzar, the fiery furnace, Jonah and the whale, or rather sea monster, Jonah and the gourd, and the adoration of the Magi, are among the most frequent.

Turning our attention to the mural paintings which are to be found on the vaulted ceilings of the mortuary chapels, or on the arched recesses over the immediate receptacles of the body, we find that Jonah is the favourite subject, recurring again and again in a variety of the most grotesque, and often uncouth forms, for these paintings were evidently executed by ruder hands, and conceived by less cultivated minds, than the ornamentation of the more expensive sarcophagi. From the constant recurrence and position of this subject, there can be little doubt that it was regarded as typical of the burial of our Lord, and of his resurrection on the third day, and was used to remind the beholders of these events in the life of Christ, which piety, or the fear of the heathen, forbade to be directly portrayed.

Next in frequency, perhaps, we have the three children and the fiery furnace, and Daniel in the lions' den, typical of the persecutions and the triumphant faith of the Church. Christ as the Good Shepherd, Noah in the ark, Christ raising Lazarus, Moses striking the rock, Orpheus taming the wild animals, are all of constant occurrence.

The impression received from examining great numbers of these pictures and sarcophagi is, that they represent very faithfully the narrative and the miraculous events of the canonical Gospels and of the books of the Old Testament as we now have them. Wherever there is any foreign element it seems to have been borrowed from the well-known classical fables rather than from any of the apocryphal gospels, which are scantily, if at all, represented.

There does not seem to be any attempt to represent pictorially any hard or well-defined system of doctrinal theology. Nowhere do I recollect any clear symbol of the Trinity. Christ is depicted as the Good Shepherd, as the loving and tender Saviour of his flock. All his milder aspects are brought into prominence. He saves his

followers from the sins of the world, he leads them to the gates of heaven, and crowns them with the glory of the angels. Rarely, if ever, is he represented as the stern judge, or as the indignant prophet, who has come with his winnowing fan to separate the wheat from the chaff, and to cast out the unprofitable servant into outer darkness. Of the Holy Spirit representations are extremely rare, and excepting in the baptism of Christ, I cannot now recollect an instance. I do not pretend to affirm what were or were not the doctrines of the Church of those days; that would be quite beside my present purpose. I merely venture upon certain indications of the habits and modes of thought of those early Christians, and the general idea which I have formed, is that they were a peculiar people, zealous of good works, that they were bound together by the closest ties of brotherhood, and that they lived a life entirely apart from the world, as far as concerned their religion and morality. There is, however, abundant evidence that they were engaged in almost every variety of professional and mercantile labour. To live in Christ, to die in Christ, and to rise in Christ, was the one object of their religious life. Christ, as we find him in the catacombs, agrees with neither the Trinitarian nor the Unitarian ideal. We see there a mystic image, in which the attributes of Deity and humanity are blended, and salvation through Christ is not so much the lowering of the Godhead down to the manhood, as the elevation of the manhood into the Godhead. *Vivas in Christo, Vivas in Deo,* seem to be equivalent terms, and manifestly express the desire of the believers for the present as well as for the future life. This view will, I think, be illustrated and substantiated by a reference to the multitude of inscriptions which remain, for the most part, unfortunately, without date, but all probably belonging to the third and fourth centuries. Possibly some few may go back to the second century. I am inclined to think that they do, but it would be very difficult to prove this.

Not a few of the inscriptions are in Greek, and still more frequently in Latin written in Greek characters, or in a mixture of the two languages, as—

“APTOYPLE IN IIAKE IDUS JUNIAS.”

Judging from the numerous inscriptions in most tender terms on the tombs of husbands and wives, parents and children, we conclude that there must have existed very strong feelings of family affection. The different members of the same family were buried near together, and there are frequent inscriptions, stating that one individual bought a bisomum, a trisomum, or a quadrisomum, viz., a place for two, three, or four bodies. This is, I think, a term introduced by the Christians, of Greek origin, from *σώμα*, a body. These burial-places were bought from the fossor, or sexton as we should now call him. The phrase, “*Benemerens*,” whether applied to the deceased or to those who placed the tablet to his memory, is of very frequent occur-

rence. But as it was also in common use among the heathen, it does not seem to have had any peculiar Christian significance.

It is difficult to draw any theological conclusions from these inscriptions. We find a significance rather in the absence than in the presence of peculiar references.

I must not omit to notice the close resemblance in design and ornamentation of these early Christian tombs to the heathen monuments of the preceding age. We find an example of this similarity in the tomb of the heathen family of Ovidius. There, however, the arched recesses were adorned with scenes from heathen mythology, and instead of large spaces for the bodies, there were small receptacles for the urns in which the ashes of the deceased were placed.

The Good Shepherd is a symbol used by Christian and heathen alike. To the latter it represented the advent of spring. The palm-branch and the vine also are signs common to both religious systems.

Turning now to an entirely different class, we come to some of the most important of these reliques, which are probably among the very earliest remains of Christian art, although they are unfortunately without exact dates. These are a number of circular glass discs, or small saucers, with designs and inscriptions in gilt. Their purpose is doubtful, but it is likely that they were used either in the Agapae, or in the eucharistic ceremonies. The inscriptions are in Greek, and the workmanship far from rude. The favourite subjects on these discs are Peter and Paul, sometimes with Justus and Damasus. One represents Christ raising Lazarus; another, Annes,—perhaps St. Agnes; another, probably Joseph and Mary and the infant Jesus. On nearly all occur the letters, Η. Ζ.; or the words, ΠΗΗ ΖΗΖΗΣ,—a half-Greek, half-Latin phrase, signifying "May you live piously," or, as it is often found, "Vivas in Deo." There is one very remarkable specimen in the British Museum, to all appearance of the same origin as the rest, on which are represented the busts of "Orfitus and Constantia," with a full-length figure of Hercules, with the club and lion's skin, and the inscription, "In nomine Herculis," showing the wide latitude allowed in symbolism in those early days.

The expression, ΠΗΗ ΖΗΖΗΣ, reminds us of the fondness of the ancients, and of the Christians especially, for a sort of playing upon words by a kind of pious double entendre. When one Christian saluted another with the favourite phrase, he would hear more or less distinctly the name of Jesus, or Zesus as we very frequently find it written; and this, without doubt, is the reason why the Greek word was used, even by the Romans, in preference to the Latin vivas.

Again, the John Dory, the fish par excellence which was used as a symbol of Christ, was called by the Greeks, Zeus, reminding them of Jesus, or Zesus. The word *ἰχθύς*, "a fish," is formed of the initial letters of the phrase, *Ιησοῦς χριστός θεοῦ υἱος σωτῆρ*,—"Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour,"—and had reference both to the name and the

Divine office of our Lord. I have often wondered what was the sign which Constantine saw in the Heavens. The Latin phrase ran, "In hoc signo vinceas." Now, if we take the initial letters of these words, and read them from the Greek alphabet, we again have the mystic ΙΗΣΥ, which is very probably the solution of the pious riddle.

The sacred monogram itself, certainly one of the earliest of the Christian symbols, and which represents at once the cross and the two first letters of the name of him who was crucified thereon, was, according to Casalius, in previous use among the heathen, and may fairly be derived from the mystic *crux ansata* of the Egyptians. It is to be found, for instance, on the coins of the Ptolemies. Casalius, indeed, a devout Catholic, supposes that it merely stood for the name of the person in whose mint the coin was struck. I think it more probable that it was used with some reference to the solar deity,—for it was by no means among the Egyptians only that the cross was a sacred emblem before the time of Christ; and that the early Christians made use of this, as of every other opportunity of softening the prejudices of the heathen, by adopting an old symbol with a new signification. A striking instance of this adaptation is the very common representation of Mary with the infant Jesus on her knee, which, in its earliest form, is a direct copy of Isis with the child Horus.

Next in order we come to the Christian sepulchral lamps, which, from their solid form, and from being buried out of sight, have remained in large numbers to the present day. They have no dates, but belong probably to the very earliest ages of the Church. They are found not only in the Roman catacombs, but wherever Christians were buried. In the mural paintings and on the carved sarcophagi, I have tried to show that the mystico-theological element was but sparingly represented. On the lamps, however, all the common forms of Christian symbolism find full expression; but there is rarely any reference to the miraculous events, and not very much to the historical narrative of the New Testament. It is also noteworthy that there is a very free use of pagan symbols, in conjunction with those which are wholly or partially of a Christian origin. Thus, for example, on one lamp we find the following heterogeneous collection. Christ, in the attitude of the Good Shepherd, stands in the centre, surrounded by a flock of sheep; on his right hand is Jonah coming out of the mouth of a sea-monster, and on his left the same personage asleep under the gourd; over the sea-monster is the square box or sacred arch used in the Bacchic mysteries, and sitting on the top of it the dove of Noah. Immediately over the head of the principal figure are the seven stars; on their right hand Jupiter, and on the left Juno, with the peacock, evidently symbolising the sun and moon.

Many of the emblems and symbols found on the lamps are identical with those of the gnostic gems, and no one looking at a large number of them, can doubt that we have here the point of transition

from heathen to Christian art, for to Christ are given all the various attributes of the sun-god, whether as Apollo, Serapis, or Horus.

Having now arrived at that which I regard as the earliest stratum, which lies immediately upon the original Christian rock, I will very briefly classify the fossils which are found therein, and point out the source whence they also, historically speaking, seem to have been derived.

We find that even in the Roman catacombs there is a large proportion of Greek names, and that Greek characters are frequently used even when the language is Latin. Then, again, the favourite expression ΗΙΗ ΖΖΖΖ, and the monogram ☧, the word ψσυς, the Α and Ω, and lastly, the character of the body representing Lazarus, which is always that of an Egyptian mummy, and not at all like a corpse which had been raised from a grave such as we use, nor to that which would be found in a Roman sarcophagus; all these evidences combined, seem to direct our attention to some Greco-Egyptian source, and point very distinctly to the city of Alexandria, where alone these two elements are found in combination. There it was that the greatest of Jewish colonies had settled; there yet lingered the remnants of ancient Egyptian superstition, and there flourished the most active theological and philosophical schools of the age. There the Hellenising Jews had already translated the Old Testament into Greek, and in the deserts near at hand, the Therapeuta,—the healers,—had established themselves, in imitation of the sacred brotherhood of the Essenes in Palestine. There also Rabbinical and Egyptian mysticism were to be found side by side, and the Jewish philosopher Philo and his followers were attempting to harmonise the Mosaic records concerning the creation of the world with the doctrines of the Neo-Platonic philosophy.

To this place, and this period, and this school of thought, then, it would seem that we ought to direct our most earnest attention, if we wish rightly to understand the earliest symbolism under which the central doctrines of Christianity were veiled; and surely it is not too much to hope that some new light might be thrown even on the authentic documents of our religion, if our learned men would fix their attention on these earliest monuments of our faith, instead of devoting themselves exclusively to interpretations of the Greek and Latin fathers, who probably knew far less than we now do of the state of the heathen and Jewish world previous to the time of Christ. The industrious antiquarians of the last century have bequeathed to us, in their splendid folios, a mine of wealth, which has been left almost unused in the present day; and whilst large sums of money are being very properly expended on the mere physical explorations of the Holy City, we cannot help hoping that something may yet be worthily done to illustrate the genesis and true meaning of those marvellous words and that glorious life, which sanctified that already hallowed ground.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER XLVII.

MR. MILDWAY'S BILL.

It will be necessary that we should go back in our story for a very short period in order that the reader may be told that Phineas Finn was duly re-elected at Loughton after his appointment at the Treasury Board. There was some little trouble at Loughton, and something more of expense than he had before encountered. Mr. Quintus Slide absolutely came down, and was proposed by Mr. Vellum for the borough. Mr. Vellum being a gentleman learned in the law, and hostile to the interests of the noble owner of Saulsby, was able to raise a little trouble against our hero. Mr. Slide was proposed by Mr. Vellum, and seconded by Mr. Vellum's clerk,—though, as it afterwards appeared, Mr. Vellum's clerk was not in truth an elector,—and went to the poll like a man. He received three votes, and at twelve o'clock withdrew. This in itself could hardly have afforded compensation for the expense which Mr. Slide or his backers must have encountered;—but he had an opportunity of making a speech, every word of which was reported in the People's Banner; and if the speech was made in the language given in the report, Mr. Slide was really possessed of some oratorical power. Most of those who read the speech in the columns of the People's Banner were probably not aware how favourable an opportunity of retouching his sentences in type had been given to Mr. Slide by the fact of his connection with the newspaper. The speech had been very severe upon our hero; and though the speaker had been so hooted and pelted at Loughton as to have been altogether inaudible,—so maltreated that in point of fact he had not been able to speak above a tenth part of his speech at all,—nevertheless the speech did give Phineas a certain amount of pain. Why Phineas should have read it who can tell? But who is there that abstains from reading that which is printed in abuse of himself?

In the speech as it was printed Mr. Slide declared that he had no thought of being returned for the borough. He knew too well how the borough was managed, what slaves the electors were;—how they groaned under a tyranny from which hitherto they had been unable to release themselves. Of course the Earl's nominee, his lacquey as the honourable gentleman might be called, would be returned. The Earl

could order them to return whichever of his lacqueys he pleased.—There is something peculiarly pleasing to the democratic ear in the word lacquey! Any one serving a big man, whatever the service may be, is the big man's lacquey in the People's Banner.—The speech throughout was very bitter. Mr. Phineas Finn, who had previously served in Parliament as the lacquey of an Irish earl, and had been turned off by him, had now fallen into the service of the English earl, and was the lacquey chosen for the present occasion. But he, Quintus Slide, who boasted himself to be a man of the people,—he could tell them that the days of their thralldom were coming to an end, and that their enfranchisement was near at hand. That friend of the people, Mr. Turnbull, had a clause in his breeches-pocket which he would either force down the unwilling throat of Mr. Mildmay, or else drive the imbecile Premier from office by carrying it in his teeth. Loughton, as Loughton, must be destroyed, but it should be born again in a better birth as a part of a real electoral district, sending a real member, chosen by a real constituency, to a real Parliament. In those days,—and they would come soon,—Mr. Quintus Slide rather thought that Mr. Phineas Finn would be found "nowhere," and he rather thought also that when he showed himself again, as he certainly should do, in the midst of that democratic electoral district as the popular candidate for the honour of representing it in Parliament, that democratic electoral district would accord to him a reception very different from that which he was now receiving from the Earl's lacqueys in the parliamentary village of Loughton. A prettier bit of fiction than these sentences as composing a part of any speech delivered, or proposed to be delivered, at Loughton, Phineas thought he had never seen. And when he read at the close of the speech that though the Earl's hired bullies did their worst, the remarks of Mr. Slide were received by the people with reiterated cheering, he threw himself back in his chair at the Treasury and roared. The poor fellow had been three minutes on his legs, had received three rotten eggs, and one dead dog, and had retired. But not the half of the speech as printed in the People's Banner has been quoted. The sins of Phineas, who in spite of his inability to open his mouth in public had been made a Treasury hack by the aristocratic influence,—"by aristocratic influence not confined to the male sex,"—were described at great length, and in such language that Phineas for a while was fool enough to think that it would be his duty to belabour Mr. Slide with a horsewhip. This notion, however, did not endure long with him, and when Mr. Monk told him that things of that kind came as a matter of course, he was comforted.

But he found it much more difficult to obtain comfort when he weighed the arguments brought forward against the abominations of such a borough as that for which he sat, and reflected that if Mr. Turnbull brought forward his clause, he, Phineas Finn, would be

bound to vote against the clause, knowing the clause to be right, because he was a servant of the Government. The arguments, even though they appeared in the People's Banner, were true arguments; and he had on one occasion admitted their truth to his friend Lady Laura,—in the presence of that great Cabinet Minister, her husband. “What business has such a man as that down there? Is there a single creature who wants him?” Lady Laura had said. “I don't suppose anybody does want Mr. Quintus Slide,” Phineas had replied; “but I am disposed to think the electors should choose the man they do want, and that at present they have no choice left to them.” “They are quite satisfied,” said Lady Laura, angrily. “Then, Lady Laura,” continued Phineas, “that alone should be sufficient to prove that their privilege of returning a member to Parliament is too much for them. We can't defend it.” “It is defended by tradition,” said Mr. Kennedy. “And by its great utility,” said Lady Laura, bowing to the young member who was present, and forgetting that very useless old gentleman, her cousin, who had sat for the borough for many years. “In this country it doesn't do to go too fast,” said Mr. Kennedy. “And then the mixture of vulgarity, falsehood, and pretence!” said Lady Laura, shuddering as her mind recurred to the fact that Mr. Quintus Slide had contaminated Loughton by his presence. “I am told that they hardly let him leave the place alive.”

Whatever Mr. Kennedy and Lady Laura might think about Loughton and the general question of small boroughs, it was found by the Government, to their great cost, that Mr. Turnbull's clause was a reality. After two months of hard work, all questions of franchise had been settled, rating and renting, new and newfangled, fancy franchises and those which no one fancied, franchises for boroughs and franchises for counties, franchises single, dual, three-cornered, and four-sided,—by various clauses to which the Committee of the whole House had agreed after some score of divisions,—the matter of the franchise had been settled. No doubt there was the House of Lords, and there might yet be shipwreck. But it was generally believed that the Lords would hardly look at the bill,—that they would not even venture on an amendment. The Lords would only be too happy to let the matter be settled by the Commons themselves. But then, after the franchise, came redistribution. How sick of the subject were all members of the Government, no one could tell who did not see their weary faces. The whole House was sick, having been whipped into various lobbies, night after night, during the heat of the summer, for weeks past. Redistribution! Why should there be any redistribution? They had got, or would get, a beautiful franchise. Could they not see what that would do for them? Why redistribute anything? But, alas, it was too late to go back to so blessed an idea as that! Redistribution they must have. But there should be as little redistribution as possible. Men were sick of it all,

and would not be exigeant. Something should be done for overgrown counties ;—something for new towns which had prospered in brick and mortar. It would be easy to crush up a peccant borough or two,—a borough that had been discovered in its sin. And a few boroughs now blessed with two members might consent to be blessed only with one. Fifteen small clauses might settle the redistribution,—in spite of Mr. Turnbull,—if only Mr. Daubeny would be good-natured.

Neither the weather, which was very hot, nor the tedium of the session, which had been very great, nor the anxiety of Ministers, which was very pressing, had any effect in impairing the energy of Mr. Turnbull. He was as instant, as oratorical, as hostile, as indignant about redistribution as he had been about the franchise. He had been sure then, and he was sure now, that Ministers desired to burke the question, to deceive the people, to produce a bill that should be no bill. He brought out his clause,—and made Loughton his instance. “Would the honourable gentleman who sat lowest on the Treasury bench,—who at this moment was in sweet confidential intercourse with the right honourable gentleman now President of the Board of Trade, who had once been a friend of the people,—would the young Lord of the Treasury get up in his place and tell them that no peer of Parliament had at present a voice in sending a member to their House of Commons,—that no peer would have a voice if this bill, as proposed by the Government, were passed in its present useless, ineffectual, conservative, and most dishonest form ?”

Phineas, who replied to this, and who told Mr. Turnbull that he himself could not answer for any peers,—but that he thought it probable that most peers would, by their opinions, somewhat influence the opinions of some electors,—was thought to have got out of his difficulty very well. But there was the clause of Mr. Turnbull to be dealt with,—a clause directly disfranchising seven single-winged boroughs, of which Loughton was of course one,—a clause to which the Government must either submit or object. Submission would be certain defeat in one way, and objection would be as certain defeat in another,—if the gentlemen on the other side were not disposed to assist the ministers. It was said that the Cabinet was divided. Mr. Gresham and Mr. Monk were for letting the seven boroughs go. Mr. Mildmay could not bring himself to obey Mr. Turnbull, and Mr. Palliser supported him. When Mr. Mildmay was told that Mr. Daubeny would certainly go into the same lobby with Mr. Turnbull respecting the seven boroughs, he was reported to have said that in that case Mr. Daubeny must be prepared with a Government. Mr. Daubeny made a beautiful speech about the seven boroughs ;—the seven sins, and seven stars, and seven churches, and seven lamps. He would make no party question of this. Gentlemen who usually acted

with him would vote as their own sense of right or wrong directed them ;—from which expression of a special sanction it was considered that these gentlemen were not accustomed to exercise the privilege now accorded to them. But in regarding the question as one of right and wrong, and in looking at what he believed to be both the wish of the country and its interests, he, Mr. Daubeny,—he, himself, being simply a humble member of that House,—must support the clause of the honourable gentleman. Almost all those to whom had been surrendered the privilege of using their own judgment for that occasion only, used it discreetly,—as their chief had used it himself,—and Mr. Turnbull carried his clause by a majority of fifteen. It was then 3 A.M., and Mr. Gresham rising after the division, said that his right honourable friend the First Lord of the Treasury was too tired to return to the House, and had requested him to state that the Government would declare their purpose at 6 P.M. on the following evening.

Phineas, though he had made his little speech in answer to Mr. Turnbull with good-humoured flippancy, had recorded his vote in favour of the seven boroughs with a sore heart. Much as he disliked Mr. Turnbull, he knew that Mr. Turnbull was right in this. He had spoken to Mr. Monk on the subject, as it were asking Mr. Monk's permission to throw up his office, and vote against Mr. Mildmay. But Mr. Monk was angry with him, telling him that his conscience was of that restless, uneasy sort which is neither useful nor manly. "We all know," said Mr. Monk, "and none better than Mr. Mildmay, that we cannot justify such a borough as Loughton by the theory of our parliamentary representation,—any more than we can justify the fact that Huntingdonshire should return as many members as the East Riding. There must be compromises, and you should trust to others who have studied the matter more thoroughly than you, to say how far the compromise should go at the present moment."

"It is the influence of the peer, not the paucity of the electors," said Phineas.

"And has no peer any influence in a county? Would you disfranchise Westmoreland? Believe me, Finn, if you want to be useful, you must submit yourself in such matters to those with whom you act."

Phineas had no answer to make, but he was not happy in his mind. And he was the less happy, perhaps, because he was very sure that Mr. Mildmay would be beaten. Mr. Low in these days harassed him sorely. Mr. Low was very keen against such boroughs as Loughton, declaring that Mr. Daubeny was quite right to join his standard to that of Mr. Turnbull on such an issue. Mr. Low was the reformer now, and Phineas found himself obliged to fight a losing battle on behalf of an acknowledged abuse. He never went near Bunce; but, unfortunately for him, Bunce caught him once in the street and showed him

no mercy. "Slide was a little 'eavy on you in the Banner the other day,—eh, Mr. Finn?—too 'eavy, as I told him."

"Mr. Slide can be just as heavy as he pleases, Bunce."

"That's in course. The press is free, thank God,—as yet. But it wasn't any good rattling away at the Earl's little borough when it's sure to go. Of course it'll go, Mr. Finn."

"I think it will."

"The whole seven on 'em. The 'ouse couldn't but do it. They tell me it's all Mr. Mildmay's own work, sticking out for keeping on 'em. He's very old, and so we'll forgive him. But he must go, Mr. Finn."

"We shall know all about that soon, Bunce."

"If you don't get another seat, Mr. Finn, I suppose we shall see you back at the Inn. I hope we may. It's better than being member for Loughton, Mr. Finn;—you may be sure of that." And then Mr. Bunce passed on.

Mr. Turnbull carried his clause, and Loughton was doomed. Loughton and the other six deadly sins were anathematized, exorcised, and finally got rid of out of the world by the voices of gentlemen who had been proclaiming the beauty of such pleasant vices all their lives, and who in their hearts hated all changes that tended towards popular representation. But not the less was Mr. Mildmay beaten; and, in accordance with the promise made by his first lieutenant immediately after the vote was taken, the Prime Minister came forward on the next evening and made his statement. He had already put his resignation into the hands of Her Majesty, and Her Majesty had graciously accepted it. He was very old, and felt that the time had come in which it behoved him to retire into that leisure which he thought he had, perhaps, earned. He had hoped to carry this bill as the last act of his political life; but he was too old, too stiff, as he said, in his prejudices, to bend further than he had bent already, and he must leave the completion of the matter in other hands. Her Majesty had sent for Mr. Gresham, and Mr. Gresham had already seen Her Majesty. Mr. Gresham and his other colleagues, though they dissented from the clause which had been carried by the united efforts of gentlemen opposite to him, and of gentlemen below him on his own side of the House, were younger men than he, and would, for the country's sake,—and for the sake of Her Majesty,—endeavour to carry the bill through. There would then, of course, be a dissolution, and the future Government would, no doubt, depend on the choice of the country. From all which it was understood that Mr. Gresham was to go on with the bill to a conclusion, whatever might be the divisions carried against him, and that a new Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs must be chosen. Phineas understood, also, that he had lost his seat at Loughton. For the borough of Loughton there would never again be an election. "If I had been

Mr. Mildmay, I would have thrown the bill up altogether," Lord Brentford said afterwards; "but of course it was not for me to interfere."

The session was protracted for two months after that,—beyond the time at which grouse should have been shot,—and by the 23rd of August became the law of the land. "I shall never get over it," said Mr. Ratler to Mr. Finn, seated one terribly hot evening on a bench behind the Cabinet Ministers,—"never. I don't suppose such a session for work was ever known before. Think what it is to have to keep men together in August, with the thermometer at 81°, and the river stinking like,—like the very mischief." Mr. Ratler, however, did not die.

On the last day of the season Laurence Fitzgibbon resigned. Rumours reached the ears of Phineas as to the cause of this, but no certain cause was told him. It was said that Lord Cantrip had insisted upon it, Laurence having by mischance been called upon for some official statement during an unfortunate period of absence. There was, however, a mystery about it;—but the mystery was not half so wonderful as the triumph to Phineas, when Mr. Gresham offered him the place.

"But I shall have no seat," said Phineas.

"We shall none of us have seats to-morrow," said Mr. Gresham.

"But I shall be at a loss to find a place to stand for."

"The election will not come on till November, and you must look about you. Both Mr. Monk and Lord Brentford seem to think you will be in the House."

And so the bill was carried, and the session was ended.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

"THE DUKE."

By the middle of September there was assembled a large party at Matching Priory, a country mansion belonging to Mr. Plantagenet Palliser. The men had certainly been chosen in reference to their political feelings and position,—for there was not a guest in the house who had voted for Mr. Turnbull's clause, or the wife or daughter, or sister of any one who had so voted. Indeed, in these days politics ran so high that among politicians all social gatherings were brought together with some reference to the state of parties. Phineas was invited, and when he arrived at Matching he found that half the Cabinet was there. Mr. Kennedy was not there, nor was Lady Laura. Mr. Monk was there, and the Duke—with the Duchess, and Mr. Gresham, and Lord Thrift; Mrs. Max Goesler was there also, and Mrs. Bonteen,—Mr. Bonteen being detained somewhere out of the

way; and Violet Effingham was expected in two days, and Lord Chiltern at the end of the week. Lady Glencora took an opportunity of imparting this latter information to Phineas very soon after his arrival; and Phineas, as he watched her eye and her mouth while she spoke, was quite sure that Lady Glencora knew the story of the duel. "I shall be delighted to see him again," said Phineas. "That is all right," said Lady Glencora. There were also there Mr. and Mrs. Grey, who were great friends of the Pallisers,—and on the very day on which Phineas reached Matching, at half an hour before the time for dressing, the Duke of Omnium arrived. Now, Mr. Palliser was the Duke's nephew and heir,—and the Duke of Omnium was a very great person indeed. I hardly know why it should have been so, but the Duke of Omnium was certainly a greater man in public estimation than the other duke then present,—the Duke of St. Bungay. The Duke of St. Bungay was a useful man, and had been so all his life, sitting in Cabinets and serving his country, constant as any peer in the House of Lords, always ready to take on his own shoulders any troublesome work required of him, than whom Mr. Mildmay, and Mr. Mildmay's predecessor at the head of the liberal party, had had no more devoted adherent. But the Duke of Omnium had never yet done a day's work on behalf of his country. They both wore the Garter, the Duke of St. Bungay having earned it by service, the Duke of Omnium having been decorated with the blue ribbon,—because he was Duke of Omnium. The one was a moral, good man, a good husband, a good father, and a good friend. The other,—did not bear quite so high a reputation. But men and women thought but little of the Duke of St. Bungay, while the other duke was regarded with an almost reverential awe. I think the secret lay in the simple fact that the Duke of Omnium had not been common in the eyes of the people. He had contrived to envelope himself in something of the ancient mystery of wealth and rank. Within three minutes of the Duke's arrival Mrs. Bonteen, with an air of great importance, whispered a word to Phineas. "He has come. He arrived exactly at seven!"

"Who has come?" Phineas asked.

"The Duke of Omnium!" she said, almost reprimanding him by her tone of voice for his indifference. "There has been a great doubt whether or no he would show himself at last. Lady Glencora told me that he never will pledge himself. I am so glad he has come."

"I don't think I ever saw him," said Phineas.

"Oh, I have seen him,—a magnificent-looking man! I think it is so very nice of Lady Glencora getting him to meet us. It is very rarely that he will join a great party, but they say Lady Glencora can do anything with him since the heir was born. I suppose you have heard all about that."

"No," said Phineas; "I have heard nothing of the heir, but I know that there are three or four babies."

"There was no heir, you know, for a year and a half, and they were all au désespoir; and the Duke was very nearly quarrelling with his nephew; and Mr. Palliser——; you know it had very nearly come to a separation."

"I don't know anything at all about it," said Phineas, who was not very fond of the lady who was giving him the information.

"It is so, I can assure you; but since the boy was born Lady Glencora can do anything with the Duke. She made him go to Ascot last spring, and he presented her with the favourite for one of the races on the very morning the horse ran. They say he gave three thousand pounds for him."

"And did Lady Glencora win?"

"No;—the horse lost; and Mr. Palliser has never known what to do with him since. But it was very pretty of the Duke;—was it not?"

Phineas, though he had intended to show to Mrs. Boneteen how little he thought about the Duke of Omnium,—how small was his respect for a great peer who took no part in politics,—could not protect himself from a certain feeling of anxiety as to the aspect and gait and words of the man of whom people thought so much, of whom he had heard so often, and of whom he had seen so little. He told himself that the Duke of Omnium should be no more to him than any other man, but yet the Duke of Omnium was more to him than other men. When he came down into the drawing-room he was angry with himself, and stood apart;—and was then angry with himself again because he stood apart. Why should he make a difference in his own bearing because there was such a man in the company? And yet he could not avoid it. When he entered the room the Duke was standing in a large bow-window, and two or three ladies and two or three men were standing round him. Phineas would not go near the group, telling himself that he would not approach a man so grand as was the Duke of Omnium. He saw Madame Max Goesler among the party, and after a while he saw her retreat. As she retreated, Phineas knew that some word from Madame Max Goesler had not been received with the graciousness which she had expected. There was the prettiest smile in the world on the lady's face, and she took a corner on a sofa with an air of perfect satisfaction. But yet Phineas knew that she had received a wound.

"I called twice on you in London," said Phineas, coming up close to her, "but was not fortunate enough to find you!"

"Yes;—but you came so late in the season as to make it impossible that there should be any arrangements for our meeting. What can any woman do when a gentleman calls on her in August?"

"I came in July."

"Yes, you did; on the 31st. I keep the most accurate record of all such things, Mr. Finn. But let us hope that we may have better luck next year. In the meantime, we can only enjoy the good things that are going."

"Socially, or politically, Madame Goesler?"

"Oh, socially. How can I mean anything else when the Duke of Omnium is here? I feel so much taller at being in the same house with him. Do not you? But you are a spoilt child of fortune, and perhaps you have met him before."

"I think I once saw the back of a hat in the park, and somebody told me that the Duke's head was inside it."

"And you have never seen him but that once?"

"Never but that once,—till now."

"And do not you feel elated?"

"Of course I do. For what do you take me, Madame Goesler?"

"I do,—immensely. I believe him to be a fool, and I never heard of his doing a kind act to anybody in my life."

"Not when he gave the racehorse to Lady Glencora?"

"I wonder whether that was true. Did you ever hear of such an absurdity? As I was saying, I don't think he ever did anything for anybody;—but then, you know, to be Duke of Omnium! It isn't necessary,—is it,—that a Duke of Omnium should do anything except be Duke of Omnium?"

At this moment Lady Glencora came up to Phineas, and took him across to the Duke. The Duke had expressed a desire to be introduced to him. Phineas, half-pleased and half-disgusted, had no alternative, and followed Lady Glencora. The Duke shook hands with him, and made a little bow, and said something about the garrotters, which Phineas, in his confusion, did not quite understand. He tried to reply as he would have replied to anybody else; but the weight of the Duke's majesty was too much for him, and he bungled. The Duke made another little bow, and in a moment was speaking a word of condescension to some other favoured individual. Phineas retreated altogether disgusted,—hating the Duke, but hating himself worse; but he would not retreat in the direction of Madame Max Goesler. It might suit that lady to take an instant little revenge for her discomfiture, but it did not suit him to do so. The question with him would be, whether in some future part of his career it might not be his duty to assist in putting down Dukes of Omnium.

At dinner Phineas sat between Mrs. Bonteen and the Duchess of St. Bungay, and did not find himself very happy. At the other end of the table the Duke,—the great Duke, was seated at Lady Glencora's right hand, and on his other side Fortune had placed Madamo Max Goesler. The greatest interest which Phineas had during the dinner was in watching the operations,—the triumphantly successful operations of that lady. Before dinner she had been wounded by the

Duke. The Duke had not condescended to accord the honour of his little bow of graciousness to some little flattering morsel of wit which the lady had uttered on his behoof. She had said a sharp word or two in her momentary anger to Phineas; but when Fortune was so good to her in that matter of her place at dinner, she was not fool enough to throw away her chance. Throughout the soup and fish she was very quiet. She said a word or two after her first glass of champagne. The Duke refused two dishes, one after another, and then she glided into conversation. By the time that he had his roast mutton before him she was in full play, and as she eat her peach, the Duke was bending over her with his most gracious smile.

" Didn't you think the session was very long, Mr. Finn? " said the Duchess to Phineas.

" Very long indeed, Duchess, " said Phineas, with his attention still fixed on Madame Max Goesler.

" The Duke found it very troublesome."

" I daresay he did, " said Phineas. That duke and that duchess were no more than any other man and any other man's wife. The session had not been longer to the Duke of St. Bungay than to all the public servants. Phineas had the greatest possible respect for the Duke of St. Bungay, but he could not take much interest in the wailings of the Duchess on her husband's behalf.

" And things do seem to be so very uncomfortable now, " said the Duchess,—thinking partly of the resignation of Mr. Mildmay, and partly of the fact that her own old peculiar maid who had lived with her for thirty years had retired into private life.

" Not so very bad, Duchess, I hope, " said Phineas, observing that at this moment Madame Max Goesler's eyes were brilliant with triumph. Then there came upon him a sudden ambition,—that he would like to " cut out " the Duke of Omnim in the estimation of Madame Max Goesler. The brightness of Madame Max Goesler's eyes had not been thrown away upon our hero.

Violet Effingham came at the appointed time, and, to the surprise of Phineas, was brought to Matching by Lord Brentford. Phineas at first thought that it was intended that the Earl and his son should meet and make up their quarrel at Mr. Palliser's house. But Lord Brentford stayed only one night, and Phineas on the next morning heard the whole history of his coming and going from Violet. " I have almost been on my knees to him to stay, " she said. " Indeed, I did go on my knees,—actually on my knees."

" And what did he say? "

" He put his arm round me and kissed me, and,—and,—I cannot tell you all that he said. But it ended in this,—that if Chiltern can be made to go to Saulsby, fatted calves without stint will be killed.

I shall do all I can to make him go; and so must you, Mr. Finn. Of course that silly affair in foreign parts is not to make any difference between you two."

Phineas smiled, and said he would do his best, and looked up into her face, and was just able to talk to her as though things were going comfortably with him. But his heart was very cold. As Violet had spoken to him about Lord Chiltern there had come upon him, for the first time,—for the first time since he had known that Lord Chiltern had been refused,—an idea, a doubt, whether even yet Violet might not become Lord Chiltern's wife. His heart was very sad, but he struggled on,—declaring that it was incumbent on them both to bring together the father and son.

"I am so glad to hear you say so, Mr. Finn," said Violet. "I really do believe that you can do more towards it than any one else. Lord Chiltern would think nothing of my advice,—would hardly speak to me on such a subject. But he respects you as well as likes you, and not the less because of what has occurred."

How was it that Violet should know aught of the respect or liking felt by this rejected suitor for that other suitor,—who had also been rejected? And how was it that she was thus able to talk of one of them to the other, as though neither of them had ever come forward with such a suit? Phineas felt his position to be so strange as to be almost burdensome. He had told Violet, when she had refused him, very plainly, that he should come again to her, and ask once more for the great gift which he coveted. But he could not ask again now. In the first place, there was that in her manner which made him sure that were he to do so, he would ask in vain; and then he felt that she was placing a special confidence in him, against which he would commit a sin were he to use her present intimacy with him for purposes of making love. They two were to put their shoulders together to help Lord Chiltern, and while doing so he could not continue a suit which would be felt by both of them to be hostile to Lord Chiltern. There might be opportunity for a chance word, and if so the chance word should be spoken; but he could not make a deliberate attack, such as he had made in Portman Square. Violet also probably understood that she had not now been caught in a mousetrap.

The Duke was to spend four days at Matching, and on the third day,—the day before Lord Chiltern was expected,—he was to be seen riding with Madame Max Goesler by his side. Madame Max Goesler was known as a perfect horsewoman,—one indeed who was rather fond of going a little fast on horseback, and who rode well to hounds. But the Duke seldom moved out of a walk, and on this occasion Madame Max was as steady in her seat and almost as slow as the mounted ghost in *Don Juan*. But it was said by some there, especially by Mrs. Bondeen, that the conversation between them

was not slow. And on the next morning the Duke and Madame Max Goesler were together again before luncheon, standing on a terrace at the back of the house, looking down on a party who were playing croquet on the lawn.

"Do you never play?" said the Duke.

"Oh yes;—one does everything a little."

"I am sure you would play well. Why do you not play now?"

"No;—I shall not play now."

"I should like to see you with your mallet."

"I am sorry your Grace cannot be gratified. I have played croquet till I am tired of it, and have come to think it is only fit for boys and girls. The great thing is to give them opportunities for flirting, and it does that."

"And do you never flirt, Madame Goesler?"

"Never at croquet, Duke."

"And what with you is the choicest time?"

"That depends on so many things,—and so much on the chosen person. What do you recommend?"

"Ah,—I am so ignorant. I can recommend nothing."

"What do you say to a mountain-top at dawn on a summer day?" asked Madame Max Goesler.

"You make me shiver," said the Duke.

"Or a boat on a lake on a summer evening, or a good lead after hounds with nobody else within three fields, or the bottom of a salt-mine, or the deck of an ocean steamer, or a military hospital in time of war, or a railway journey from Paris to Marseilles?"

"Madame Max Goesler, you have the most uncomfortable ideas."

"I have no doubt your Grace has tried each of them,—successfully. But perhaps, after all, a comfortable chair over a good fire, in a pretty room, beats everything."

"I think it does,—certainly," said the Duke. Then he whispered something at which Madame Max Goesler blushed and smiled, and immediately after that she followed those who had already gone in to lunch.

Mrs. Bonteen had been hovering round the spot on the terrace on which the Duke and Madame Max Goesler had been standing, looking on with envious eyes, meditating some attack, some interruption, some excuse for an interpolation, but her courage had failed her and she had not dared to approach. The Duke had known nothing of the hovering propinquity of Mrs. Bonteen, but Madame Goesler had seen and had understood it all.

"Dear Mrs. Bonteen," she said afterwards, "why did you not come and join us? The Duke was so pleasant."

"Two is company, and three is none," said Mrs. Bonteen, who in her anger was hardly able to choose her words quite as well as she might have done had she been more cool.

"Our friend Madame Max has made quite a new conquest," said Mrs. Bonteen to Lady Glencora.

"I am so pleased," said Lady Glencora, with apparently unaffected delight. "It is such a great thing to get anybody to amuse my uncle. You see everybody cannot talk to him, and he will not talk to everybody."

"He talked enough to her in all conscience," said Mrs. Bonteen, who was now more angry than ever.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE DUELLISTS MEET.

LORD CHILTERN arrived, and Phineas was a little nervous as to their meeting. He came back from shooting on the day in question, and was told by the servant that Lord Chiltern was in the house. Phineas went into the billiard-room in his knickerbockers, thinking probably that he might be there, and then into the drawing-room, and at last into the library,—but Lord Chiltern was not to be found. At last he came across Violet.

"Have you seen him?" he asked.

"Yes;—he was with me half an hour since, walking round the gardens."

"And how is he? Come;—tell me something about him."

"I never knew him to be more pleasant. He would give no promise about Saulsby, but he did not say that he would not go."

"Does he know that I am here?"

"Yes;—I told him so. I told him how much pleasure I should have in seeing you two together,—as friends."

"And what did he say?"

"He laughed, and said you were the best fellow in the world. You see I am obliged to be explicit."

"But why did he laugh?" Phineas asked.

"He did not tell me, but I suppose it was because he was thinking of a little trip he once took to Belgium, and he perceived that I knew all about it."

"I wonder who told you. But never mind. I do not mean to ask any questions. As I do not like that our first meeting should be before all the people in the drawing-room, I will go to him in his own room."

"Do, do;—that will be so nice of you."

Phineas sent his card up by a servant, and in a few minutes was standing with his hand on the lock of Lord Chiltern's door. The last time he had seen this man, they had met with pistols in their hands to shoot at each other, and Lord Chiltern had in truth done his very best to shoot his opponent. The cause of quarrel was the

same between them as ever. Phineas had not given up Violet, and had no intention of giving her up. And he had received no intimation whatever from his rival that there was to be a truce between them. Phineas had indeed written in friendship to Lord Chiltern, but he had received no answer;—and nothing of certainty was to be gathered from the report which Violet had just made. It might well be that Lord Chiltern would turn upon him now in his wrath, and that there would be some scene which in a strange house would be obviously objectionable. Nevertheless he had resolved that even that would be better than a chance encounter among strangers in a drawing-room. So the door was opened and the two men met.

"Well, old fellow," said Lord Chiltern, laughing. Then all doubt was over, and in a moment Phineas was shaking his former,—and present friend,—warmly by the hand. "So we've come to be an Under Secretary, have we?—and all that kind of thing."

"I had to get into harness,—when the harness offered itself," said Phineas.

"I suppose so. It's a deuce of a bore, isn't it?"

"I always liked work, you know."

"I thought you liked hunting better. You used to ride as if you did. There's Bonebreaker back again in the stable for you. That poor fool who bought him could do nothing with him, and I let him have his money back."

"I don't see why you should have done that."

"Because I was the biggest fool of the two. Do you remember when that brute got me down under the bank in the river? That was about the nearest touch I ever had. Lord bless me;—how he did squeeze me. So here you are;—staying with the Pallisers,—one of a Government party I suppose. But what are you going to do for a seat, my friend?"

"Don't talk about that yet, Chiltern."

"A sore subject,—isn't it? I think they have been quite right, you know, to put Loughton into the melting-pot,—though I'm sorry enough for your sake."

"Quite right," said Phineas.

"And yet you voted against it, old chap? But, come; I'm not going to be down upon you. So my father has been here?"

"Yes;—he was here for a day or two."

"Violet has just been telling me. You and he are as good friends as ever?"

"I trust we are."

"He never heard of that little affair?" And Lord Chiltern nodded his head, intending to indicate the direction of Blankenberg.

"I do not think he has as yet."

"So Violet tells me. Of course you know that she has heard all about it."

"I have reason to suppose as much."

"And so does Laura."

"I told her myself," said Phineas.

"The deuce you did. But I dare say it was for the best. It's a pity you had not proclaimed it at Charing Cross, and then nobody would have believed a word about it. Of course my father will hear it some day."

"You are going to Saulsby, I hope, Chiltern?"

"That question is easier asked than answered. It is quite true that the great difficulty has been got over. Laura has had her money. And if my father will only acknowledge that he has wronged me throughout, from beginning to end, I will go to Saulsby to-morrow;—and would cut you out at Loughton the next day, only that Loughton is not Loughton any longer."

"You cannot expect your father to do that."

"No;—and therefore there is a difficulty. So you've had that awfully ponderous Duke here. How did you get on with him?"

"Admirably. He condescended to do something which he called shaking hands with me."

"He is the greatest old dust out," said Lord Chiltern disrespectfully. "Did he take any notice of Violet?"

"Not that I observed."

"He ought not to be allowed into the same room with her." After that there was a short pause, as Phineas felt some hesitation in speaking of Miss Effingham to Lord Chiltern. "And how do you get on with her?" asked Lord Chiltern. Here was a question for a man to answer. The question was so hard to be answered, that Phineas did not at first make any attempt to answer it. "You know exactly the ground that I stand on," continued Lord Chiltern. "She has refused me three times. Have you been more fortunate?"

Lord Chiltern, as he asked his question, looked full into Finn's face in a manner that was irresistible. His look was not one of anger nor even of pride. It was not, indeed, without a strong dash of fun. But such as it was it showed Phineas that Lord Chiltern intended to have an answer. "No," said he at last, "I have not been more fortunate."

"Perhaps you have changed your mind," said his host.

"No;—I have not changed my mind," said Phineas quickly.

"How stands it then? Come;—let us be honest to each other. I told you down at Willingford that I would quarrel with any man who attempted to cut me out with Violet Effingham. You made up your mind that you would do so, and therefore I quarrelled with you. But we can't always be fighting duels."

"I hope we may not have to fight another."

"No;—it would be absurd," said Lord Chiltern. "I rather think

that what we did was absurd. But upon my life I did not see any other way out of it. However, that is over. How is it to be now?"

"What am I to say in answer to that?" asked Phineas.

"Just the truth. You have asked her, I suppose?"

"Yes;—I have asked her."

"And she has refused you?"

"Yes;—she refused me."

"And you mean to ask her again?"

"I shall;—if I ever think that there is a chancee. Indeed, Chiltern, I believe I shall whether I think that I have any chancee or not."

"Then we start fairly, Finn. I certainly shall do so. I believe I once told you that I never would;—but that was long before I suspected that you would enter for the same plate. What a man says on such a matter when he is down in the mouth goes for nothing. Now we understand each other, and you had better go and dress. The bell rang nearly half an hour ago, and my fellow is hanging about outside the door."

The interview had in one respect been very pleasant to Phineas, and in another it had been very bitter. It was pleasant to him to know that he and Lord Chiltern were again friends. It was a delight to him to feel that this half-savage but high-spirited young nobleman, who had been so anxious to fight with him and to shoot him, was nevertheless ready to own that he had behaved well. Lord Chiltern had in fact acknowledged that though he had been anxious to blow out our hero's brains, he was aware all the time that our hero was a good sort of fellow. Phineas understood this, and felt that it was pleasant. But with this understanding, and accompanying this pleasure, there was a conviction in his heart that the distance between Lord Chiltern and Violet would daily grow to be less and still less,—and that Lord Chiltern could afford to be generous. If Miss Effingham could teach herself to be fond of Lord Chiltern, what had he, Phineas Finn, to offer in opposition to the claims of such a suitor?

That evening Lord Chiltern took Miss Effingham out to dinner. Phineas told himself that this was of course so arranged by Lady Glencora, with the express view of serving the Saulsby interest. It was almost nothing to him at the moment that Madame Max Goesler was intrusted to him. He had his ambition respecting Madame Max Goesler; but that for the time was in abeyance. He could hardly keep his eyes off Miss Effingham. And yet, as he well knew, his observation of her must be quite useless. He knew beforehand, with absolute accuracy, the manner in which she would treat her lover. She would be kind, genial, friendly, confidential, nay, affectionate; and yet her manner would mean nothing,—would give no clue to her future decision either for or against Lord Chiltern. It was, as Phineas thought, a peculiarity with Violet Effingham that she could treat her

rejected lovers as dear familiar friends immediately after her rejection of them.

"Mr. Finn," said Madame Max Goesler, "your eyes and ears are tell-tales of your passion."

"I hope not," said Phineas, "as I certainly do not wish that any one should guess how strong is my regard for you."

"That is prettily turned,—very prettily turned; and shows more readiness of wit than I gave you credit for under your present suffering. But of course we all know where your heart is. Men do not undertake perilous journeys to Belgium for nothing."

"That unfortunate journey to Belgium! But, dear Madame Max, really nobody knows why I went."

"You met Lord Chiltern there?"

"Oh yes;—I met Lord Chiltern there."

"And there was a duel?"

"Madame Max,—you must not ask me to criminate myself."

"Of course there was, and of course it was about Miss Effingham, and of course the lady thinks herself bound to refuse both the gentlemen who were so very wicked, and of course——"

"Well,—what follows?"

"Ah!—if you have not wit enough to see, I do not think it can be my duty to tell you. But I wished to caution you as a friend that your eyes and ears should be more under your command."

"You will go to Saulsby?" Violet said to Lord Chiltern.

"I cannot possibly tell as yet," said he, frowning.

"Then I can tell you that you ought to go. I do not care a bit for your frowns. What does the fifth commandment say?"

"If you have no better arguments than the commandments, Violet——"

"There can be none better. Do you mean to say that the commandments are nothing to you?"

"I mean to say that I shan't go to Saulsby because I am told in the twentieth chapter of Exodus to honour my father and mother,—and that I shouldn't believe anybody who told me that he did anything because of the commandments."

"Oh, Lord Chiltern!"

"People are so prejudiced and so used to humbug that for the most part they do not in the least know their own motives for what they do. I will go to Saulsby to-morrow,—for a reward."

"For what reward?" said Violet, blushing.

"For the only one in the world that could tempt me to do anything."

"You should go for the sake of duty. I should not even care to see you go, much as I long for it, if that feeling did not take you there."

It was arranged that Phineas and Lord Chiltern were to leave

Matching together. Phineas was to remain at his office all October, and in November the general election was to take place. What he had hitherto heard about a future seat was most vague, but he was to meet Ratler and Barrington Erle in London, and it had been understood that Barrington Erle, who was now at Saulsby, was to make some inquiry as to that group of boroughs of which Loughton at this moment formed one. But as Loughton was the smallest of four boroughs, and as one of the four had for many years had a representative of its own, Phineas feared that no success would be found there. In his present agony he began to think that there might be a strong plea made for a few private seats in the House of Commons, and that the propriety of throwing Loughton into the melting-pot was, after all, open to question. He and Lord Chiltern were to return to London together, and Lord Chiltern, according to his present scheme, was to proceed at once to Willingford to look after the cub-hunting. Nothing that either Violet or Phineas could say to him would induce him to promise to go to Saulsby. When Phineas pressed it, he was told by Lord Chiltern that he was a fool for his pains,—by which Phineas understood perfectly well that when Lord Chiltern did go to Saulsby, he, Phineas, was to take that as strong evidence that everything was over for him as regarded Violet Effingham. When Violet expressed her eagerness that the visit should be made, she was stopped with an assurance that she could have it done at once if she pleased. Let him only be enabled to carry with him the tidings of his betrothal, and he would start for his father's house without an hour's delay. But this authority Violet would not give him. When he answered her after this fashion she could only tell him that he was ungenerous. "At any rate I am not false," he replied on one occasion. "What I say is the truth."

There was a very tender parting between Phineas and Madame Max Goesler. She had learned from him pretty nearly all his history, and certainly knew more of the reality of his affairs than any of those in London who had been his most staunch friends. "Of course you'll get a seat," she said as he took his leave of her. "If I understand it at all, they never throw over an ally so useful as you are."

"But the intention is that in this matter nobody shall any longer have the power of throwing over, or of not throwing over, anybody."

"That is all very well, my friend; but cakes will still be hot in the mouth, even though Mr. Daubeny turn purist, with Mr. Turnbull to help him. If you want any assistance in finding a seat you will not go to the People's Banner,—even yet."

"Certainly not to the People's Banner."

"I don't quite understand what the franchise is," continued Madame Max Goesler.

"Household in boroughs," said Phineas with some energy.

"Very well;—household in boroughs. I daresay that is very fine

and very liberal, though I don't comprehend it in the least. And you want a borough. Very well. You won't go to the households. I don't think you will;—not at first, that is."

"Where shall I go then?"

"Oh,—to some great patron of a borough;—or to a club;—or perhaps to some great firm. The households will know nothing about it till they are told. Is not that it?"

"The truth is, Madame Max, I do not know where I shall go. I am like a child lost in a wood. And you may understand this;—if you do not see me in Park Lane before the end of January, I shall have perished in the wood."

"Then I will come and find you,—with a troop of householders. You will come. You will be there. I do not believe in death coming without signs. You are full of life." As she spoke, she had hold of his hand, and there was nobody near them. They were in a little book-room inside the library at Matching, and the door, though not latched, was nearly closed. Phineas had flattered himself that Madame Goesler had retreated there in order that this farewell might be spoken without interruption. "And, Mr. Finn;—I wonder whether I may say one thing," she continued.

"You may say anything to me," he replied.

"No,—not in this country, in this England. There are things one may not say here,—that are tabooed by a sort of consent,—and that without any reason." She paused again, and Phineas was at a loss to think what was the subject on which she was about to speak. Could she mean? No; she could not mean to give him any outward plain-spoken sign that she was attached to him. It was the peculiar merit of this man that he was not vain, though much was done to him to fill him with vanity; and as the idea crossed his brain, he hated himself because it had been there.

"To me you may say anything, Madame Goesler," he said,—"here in England, as plainly as though we were in Vienna."

"But I cannot say it in English," she said. Then in French, blushing and laughing as she spoke,—almost stammering in spite of her usual self-confidence,—she told him that accident had made her rich, full of money. Money was a drug with her. Money she knew was wanted, even for householders. Would he not understand her, and come to her, and learn from her how faithful a woman could be?

He still was holding her by the hand, and he now raised it to his lips and kissed it. "The offer from you," he said, "is as high-minded, as generous, and as honourable as its acceptance by me would be mean-spirited, vile, and ignoble. But whether I fail or whether I succeed, you shall see me before the winter is over."

CHAPTER I.

AGAIN SUCCESSFUL.

PHINEAS also said a word of farewell to Violet before he left Matching, but there was nothing peculiar in her little speech to him, or in his to her. "Of course we shall see each other in London. Don't talk of not being in the House. Of course you will be in the House." Then Phineas had shaken his head and smiled. Where was he to find a requisite number of householders prepared to return him? But as he went up to London he told himself that the air of the House of Commons was now the very breath of his nostrils. Life to him without it would be no life. To have come within the reach of the good things of political life, to have made his mark so as to have almost insured future success, to have been the petted young official aspirant of the day,—and then to sink down into the miserable platitudes of private life, to undergo daily attendance in law-courts without a brief, to listen to men who had come to be much below him in estimation and social intercourse, to sit in a wretched chamber up three pairs of stairs at Lincoln's Inn, whereas he was now at this moment provided with a gorgeous apartment looking out into the park from the Colonial Office in Downing Street, to be attended by a mongrel between a clerk and an errand boy at 17s. 6d. a week instead of by a private secretary who was the son of an earl's sister, and was petted by countesses' daughters innumerable,—all this would surely break his heart. He could have done it, so he told himself, and could have taken glory in doing it, had not these other things come in his way. But the other things had come. He had run the risk, and had thrown the dice. And now when the game was so nearly won, must it be that everything should be lost at last?

He knew that nothing was to be gained by melancholy looks at his club, or by show of wretchedness at his office. London was very empty; but the approaching elections still kept some there who otherwise would have been looking after the first flush of pheasants. Barrington Erle was there, and was not long in asking Phineas what were his views.

"Ah;—that is so hard to say. Ratler told me that he would be looking about."

"Ratler is very well in the House," said Barrington, "but he is of no use for anything beyond it. I suppose you were not brought up at the London University?"

"Oh no," said Phineas, remembering the glories of Trinity.

"Because there would have been an opening. What do you say to Stratford,—the new Essex borough?"

"Broadbury the brewer is there already!"

"Yes;—and ready to spend any money you like to name. Let me

see. Loughton is grouped with Smotherem, and Walker is a deal too strong at Smotherem to hear of any other claim. I don't think we could dare to propose it. There are the Chelsea hamlets, but it will take a wack of money."

"I have not got a wack of money," said Phineas, laughing.

"That's the devil of it. I think, if I were you, I should hark back upon some place in Ireland. Couldn't you get Laurence to give you up his seat?"

"What! Fitzgibbon?"

"Yes. He has not a ghost of a chance of getting into office again. Nothing on earth would induce him to look at a paper during all those weeks he was at the Colonial Office; and when Cantrip spoke to him, all he said was, 'Ah, bother!' Cantrip did not like it, I can tell you."

"But that wouldn't make him give up his seat."

"Of course you'd have to arrange it." By which Phineas understood Barrington Erle to mean that he, Phineas, was in some way to give to Laurence Fitzgibbon some adequate compensation for the surrender of his position as a county member.

"I'm afraid that's out of the question," said Phineas. "If he were to go, I should not get it."

"Would you have a chance at Loughshane?"

"I was thinking of trying it," said Phineas.

"Of course you know that Morris is very ill." This Mr. Morris was the brother of Lord Tulla, and was the sitting member for Loughshane. "Upon my word I think I should try that. I don't see where we're to put our hands on a seat in England. I don't indeed." Phineas, as he listened to this, could not help thinking that Barrington Erle, though he had certainly expressed a great deal of solicitude, was not as true a friend as he used to be. Perhaps he, Phineas, had risen too fast, and Barrington Erle was beginning to think that he might as well be out of the way.

He wrote to his father, asking after the borough, and asking after the health of Mr. Morris. And in his letter he told his own story very plainly,—almost pathetically. He perhaps had been wrong to make the attempt which he had made. He began to believe that he had been wrong. But at any rate he had made it so far successfully, and failure now would be doubly bitter. He thought that the party to which he belonged must now remain in office. It would hardly be possible that a new election would produce a House of Commons favourable to a conservative ministry. And with a liberal ministry he, Phineas, would be sure of his place, and sure of an official income,—if only he could find a seat. It was all very true, and was almost pathetic. The old doctor, who was inclined to be proud of his son, was not unwilling to make a sacrifice. Mrs. Finn declared before her daughters that if there was a seat in all Ireland, Phineas ought to

have it. And Mary Flood Jones stood by listening, and wondering what Phineas would do if he lost his seat. Would he come back and live in County Clare, and be like any other girl's lover? Poor Mary had come to lose her ambition, and to think that girls whose lovers stayed at home were the happiest. Nevertheless, she would have walked all the way to Lord Tulla's house and back again, might that have availed to get the seat for Phineas. Then there came an express over from Castlemorris. The doctor was wanted at once to see Mr. Morris. Mr. Morris was very bad with gout in his stomach. According to the messenger it was supposed that Mr. Morris was dying. Before Dr. Finn had had an opportunity of answering his son's letter, Mr. Morris, the late member for Loughshane, had been gathered to his fathers.

Dr. Finn understood enough of elections for Parliament, and of the nature of boroughs, to be aware that a candidate's chance of success is very much improved by being early in the field; and he was aware, also, that the death of Mr. Morris would probably create various aspirants for the honour of representing Loughshane. But he could hardly address the Earl on the subject while the dead body of the late member was lying in the house at Castlemorris. The bill which had been passed in the late session for reforming the constitution of the House of Commons had not touched Ireland, a future measure having been promised to the Irish for their comfort; and Loughshane therefore was, as to Lord Tulla's influence, the same as it had ever been. He had not then the plenary power which the other lord had held in his hands in regard to Loughton;—but still the Castlemorris interest would go a long way. It might be possible to stand against it, but it would be much more desirable that the candidate should have it at his back. Dr. Finn was fully alive to this as he sat opposite to the old lord, saying now a word about the old lord's gout in his legs and arms, and then about the gout in the stomach, which had carried away to another world the lamented late member for the borough.

"Poor Jack!" said Lord Tulla, piteously. "If I'd known it, I needn't have paid over two thousand pounds for him last year;—need I, doctor?"

"No, indeed," said Dr. Finn, feeling that his patient might perhaps approach the subject of the borough himself.

"He never would live by any rule, you know," said the desolate brother.

"Very hard to guide;—was he not, my lord?"

"The very devil. Now, you see, I do do what I'm told pretty well,—don't I, doctor?"

"Sometimes."

"By George, I do nearly always. I don't know what you mean by sometimes. I've been drinking brandy-and-water till I'm sick of

it, to oblige you, and you tell me about—sometimes. You doctors expect a man to be a slave. Haven't I kept it out of my stomach?"

"Thank God, yes."

"It's all very well thanking God, but I should have gone as poor Jack has gone, if I hadn't been the most careful man in the world. He was drinking champagne ten days ago;—would do it, you know." Lord Tulla could talk about himself and his own ailments by the hour together, and Dr. Finn, who had thought that his noble patient was approaching the subject of the borough, was beginning again to feel that the double interest of the gout that was present, and the gout that had passed away, would be too absorbing. He, however, could say but little to direct the conversation.

"Mr. Morris, you see, lived more in London than you do, and was subject to temptation."

"I don't know what you call temptation. Haven't I the temptation of a bottle of wine under my nose every day of my life?"

"No doubt you have."

"And I don't drink it. I hardly ever take above a glass or two of brown sherry. By George! when I think of it, I wonder at my own courage. I do, indeed."

"But a man in London, my lord——"

"Why the deuce would he go to London? By-the-bye, what am I to do about the borough now?"

"Let my son stand for it, if you will, my lord."

"They've clean swept away Brentford's seat at Loughton, haven't they? Ha, ha, ha! What a nice game for him,—to have been forced to help to do it himself! There's nobody on earth I pity so much as a radical peer who is obliged to work like a nigger with a spade to shovel away the ground from under his own feet. As for me, I don't care who sits for Loughshane. I did care for poor Jack while he was alive. I don't think I shall interfere any longer. I am glad it lasted Jack's time." Lord Tulla had probably already forgotten that he himself had thrown Jack over for the last session but one.

"Phineas, my lord," began the father, "is now Under Secretary of State."

"Oh, I've no doubt he's a very fine fellow;—but, you see, he's an out-and-out Radical."

"No, my lord."

"Then how can he serve with such men as Mr. Gresham and Mr. Monk? They've turned out poor old Mildmay among them, because he's not fast enough for them. Don't tell me."

"My anxiety, of course, is for my boy's prospects. He seems to have done so well in Parliament."

"Why don't he stand for Marylebone or Finsbury?"

"The money, you know, my lord!"

"I shan't interfere here, doctor. If he comes, and the people then choose to return him, I shall say nothing. They may do just as they please. They tell me Lambert St. George, of Mockrath, is going to stand. If he does, it's the d—— piece of impudence I ever heard of. He's a tenant of my own, though he has a lease for ever; and his father never owned an acre of land in the county till his uncle died." Then the doctor knew that, with a little management, the lord's interest might be secured for his son.

Phineas came over and stood for the borough against Mr. Lambert St. George, and the contest was sharp enough. The gentry of the neighbourhood could not understand why such a man as Lord Tulla should admit a liberal candidate to succeed his brother. No one canvassed for the young Under Secretary with more persistent zeal than did his father, who, when Phineas first spoke of going into Parliament, had produced so many good arguments against that perilous step. Lord Tulla's agent stood aloof,—desolate with grief at the death of the late member. At such a moment of family affliction, Lord Tulla, he declared, could not think of such a matter as the borough. But it was known that Lord Tulla was dreadfully jealous of Mr. Lambert St. George, whose property in that part of the county was now nearly equal to his own, and who saw much more company at Mockrath than was ever entertained at Castle-morris. A word from Lord Tulla,—so said the Conservatives of the county,—would have put Mr. St. George into the seat; but that word was not spoken, and the Conservatives of the neighbourhood swore that Lord Tulla was a renegade. The contest was very sharp, but our hero was returned by a majority of seventeen votes.

Again successful! As he thought of it he remembered stories of great generals who were said to have chained Fortune to the wheels of their chariots, but it seemed to him that the goddess had never served any general with such staunch obedience as she had displayed in his cause. Had not everything gone well with him;—so well, as almost to justify him in expecting that even yet Violet Effingham would become his wife? Dear, dearest Violet! If he could only achieve that, no general, who ever led an army across the Alps, would be his equal either in success or in the reward of success. Then he questioned himself as to what he would say to Miss Flood Jones on that very night. He was to meet dear little Mary Flood Jones that evening at a neighbour's house. His sister Barbara had so told him in a tone of voice which he quite understood to imply a caution. "I shall be so glad to see her," Phineas had replied.

"If there ever was an angel on earth, it is Mary," said Barbara Finn.

"I know that she is as good as gold," said Phineas.

"Gold!" replied Barbara,—"gold indeed! She is more precious than refined gold. But, Phineas, perhaps you had better not single

her out for any special attention. She has thought it wisest to meet you."

"Of course," said Phineas. "Why not?"

"That is all, Phineas. I have nothing more to say. Men of course are different from girls."

"That's true, Barbara, at any rate."

"Don't laugh at me, Phineas, when I am thinking of nothing but of you and your interests, and when I am making all manner of excuses for you because I know what must be the distractions of the world in which you live." Barbara made more than one attempt to renew the conversation before the evening came, but Phineas thought that he had had enough of it. He did not like being told that excuses were made for him. After all, what had he done? He had once kissed Mary Flood Jones behind the door.

"I am so glad to see you, Mary," he said, coming and taking a chair by her side. He had been specially warned not to single Mary out for his attention, and yet there was the chair left vacant as though it were expected that he would fall into it.

"Thank you. We did not happen to meet last year, did we,—Mr. Finn?"

"Do not call me Mr. Finn, Mary."

"You are such a great man now!"

"Not at all a great man. If you only knew what little men we under-strappers are in London you would hardly speak to me."

"But you are something—of State now;—are you not?"

"Well;—yes. That's the name they give me. It simply means that if any member wants to badger some one in the House about the Colonies, I am the man to be badgered. But if there is any credit to be had, I am not the man who is to have it."

"But it is a great thing to be in Parliament and in the Government too."

"It is a great thing for me, Mary, to have a salary, though it may only be for a year or two. However, I will not deny that it is pleasant to have been successful."

"It has been very pleasant to us, Phineas. Mamma has been so much rejoiced."

"I am so sorry not to see her. She is at Floodborough, I suppose."

"Oh, yes;—she is at home. She does not like coming out at night in winter. I have been staying here you know for two days, but I go home to-morrow."

"I will ride over and call on your mother." Then there was a pause in the conversation for a moment. "Does it not seem odd, Mary, that we should see so little of each other?"

"You are so much away, of course."

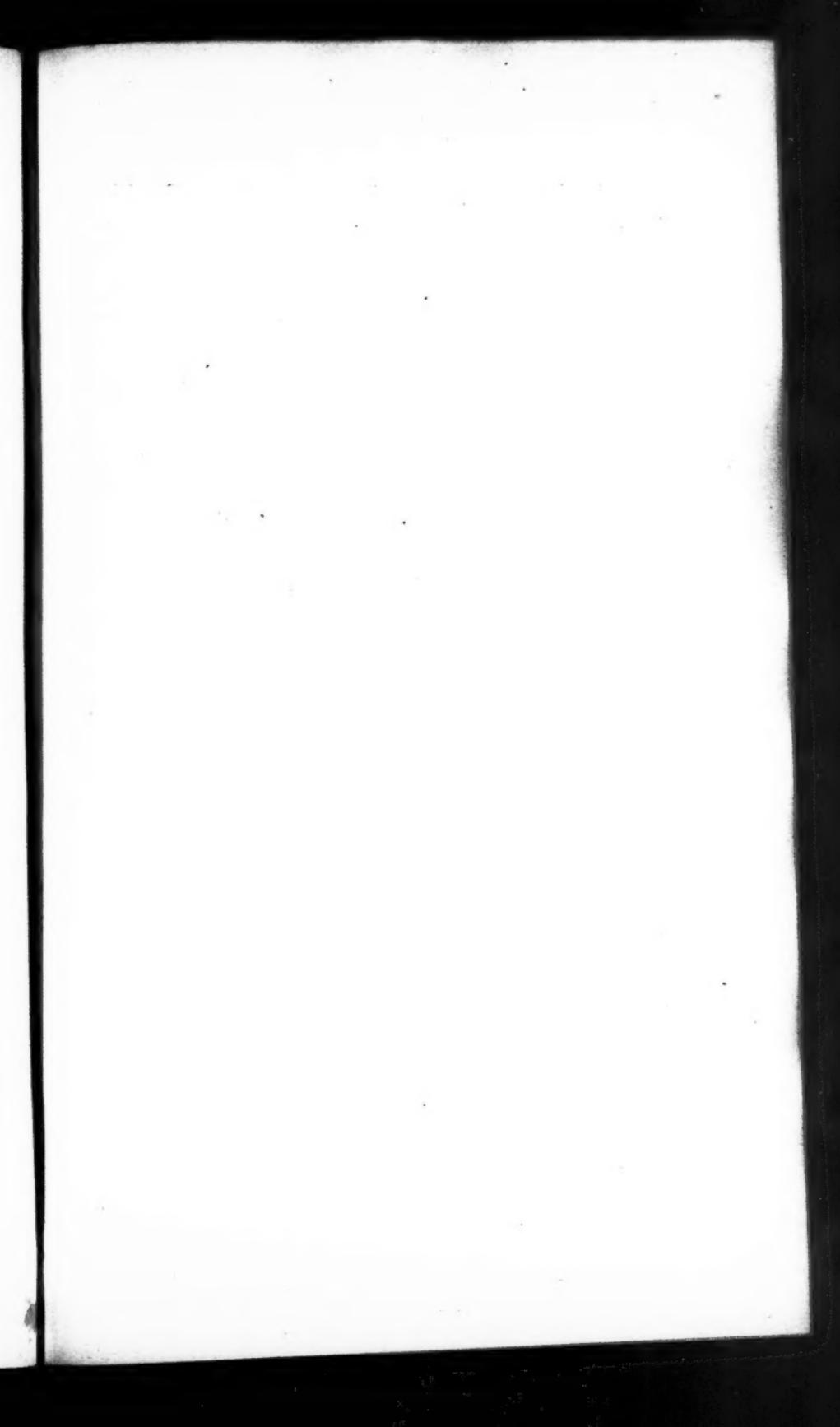
"Yes;—that is the reason. But still it seems almost unnatural."

I often wonder when the time will come that I shall be quietly at home again. I have to be back in my office in London this day week, and yet I have not had a single hour to myself since I have been at Killaloe. But I will certainly ride over and see your mother. You will be at home on Wednesday I suppose."

"Yes,—I shall be at home."

Upon that he got up and went away, but again in the evening he found himself near her. Perhaps there is no position more perilous to a man's honesty than that in which Phineas now found himself;—that, namely, of knowing himself to be quite loved by a girl whom he almost loves himself. Of course he loved Violet Effingham; and they who talk best of love protest that no man or woman can be in love with two persons at once. Phineas was not in love with Mary Flood Jones; but he would have liked to take her in his arms and kiss her; he would have liked to gratify her by swearing that she was dearer to him than all the world; he would have liked to have an episode,—and did, at the moment, think that it might be possible to have one life in London and another life altogether different at Killaloe. "Dear Mary," he said as he pressed her hand that night, "things will get themselves settled at last, I suppose." He was behaving very ill to her, but he did not mean to behave ill.

He rode over to Floodborough, and saw Mrs. Flood Jones. Mrs. Flood Jones, however, received him very coldly; and Mary did not appear. Mary had communicated to her mother her resolutions as to her future life. "The fact is, mamma, I love him. I cannot help it. If he ever chooses to come for me, here I am. If he does not, I will bear it as well as I can. It may be very mean of me, but it's true."





"So she burned the morsel of paper."

Phineas Finn. Chap. li. Page 233.